



# JOHN HAMPDEN.



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JOHN HAMPDEN

Front page

JOHN  
HAMPDEN

*A LIFE*

by  
HUGH ROSS WILLIAMSON

1933

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“Truly, Jenny (and I know you may easily be persuaded to it), he was a gallant man, an honest man, an able man, and, take all, I know not to any man living second.”

ARTHUR GOODWIN to his daughter  
on Hampden's death.



*For*  
Percy *and* Ralph Hodder-Williams



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## FOREWORD

**T**HE seventeenth century is still a battleground and the attack on the Parliamentarians continues with unabated vigour. It is, perhaps, the sole topic on which Conservatives, Communists and Anglo-Catholics find themselves in complete accord. The Tory historians, endeavouring to destroy the Whig legend, are tireless in reiterating that Charles I acted conscientiously within the letter of the law, thereby making the precise mistake which Charles himself made in imagining that the letter of the law had any relevance to the realities of the situation. They resemble nothing so much as a group of aged scientific dons carefully explaining to survivors why, by all the ascertained rules, an earthquake ought not to have happened.

The Communists hate the Puritans as the founders of capitalism ("that great pioneer of the British bourgeoisie, Oliver Cromwell," remarks Mr. John Strachey in his latest book), since, by a curious logic, they apparently identify the fight for the freedom of conscience in the seventeenth

century with the right to enforce a regimented slavery in the twentieth.

The Anglo-Catholics, basing their views on an ignorance of historical fact so profound that argument is almost impossible, persist in considering Charles I and Archbishop Laud as candidates for canonisation.

No one with a knowledge of the period will deny that, by a judicious selection from the enormous mass of material which constitutes the "sources," some evidence can be adduced in support of the strangest thesis. Nor can any historian claim immunity from the charge of distortion – even if it be unconscious – in favour of his own prejudices. For many of the events related in this book there exist accounts so voluminous that the very act of selection is itself a distortion. Hampden's trial alone fills a volume many times the length of this. So does Strafford's.

I hope therefore that an explanation of the principle on which this life of John Hampden has been written may not be considered irrelevant. The starting-point is an endeavour to recapture a vision of events as they appeared to participators in them. Looking back on the seventeenth century, noting the assassination of Buckingham and the executions of Strafford, Laud and Charles I, many people have been inclined to sympathise with the

victims merely because they were victims – and, for the same reason apparently (as if the act of being executed were evidence of moral probity), to ascribe unnatural wickedness to the executioners.

Yet the men of the first half of the seventeenth century were, if anything, more law-abiding than ourselves of the first half of the twentieth, and if, to-day, Englishmen held a public carnival to celebrate the murder of the War Minister and then proceeded at intervals to execute the Prime Minister, the Archbishop of Canterbury and the King, the question would surely be rather : “ What on earth have those eminent men done to come to such an end ? ” than “ Why has the nation been seized with a fit of abominable criminality ? ”

If therefore in these pages there is an emphasis on those qualities of Strafford, Laud and Charles I which are usually neglected by apologists, it is because there is no other way of restoring a proper perspective. And without that perspective, Hampden’s career is unintelligible.

Laud, undoubtedly, was anxious to restore to Church services a formal beauty which they lacked, but to dwell, like his partisans, on this unimportant point is tantamount to writing a life of Robespierre (whom, essentially, Laud resembles more closely than any other character in history) stressing the fact that he wept over the death of his sister’s pet

doves, and glossing over the Terror. Strafford's boisterous spirits, his courage, his family affection, his wit, do not excuse his ruthless cruelty. For Charles himself, there is nothing to be said in any capacity.

As long as Tory historians persisted in painting the Royalists white, the Whigs were bound to retort by painting the Parliamentarians even whiter. Thus the character of the great Puritan leaders has suffered hardly less distortion than that of their opponents. Hampden is the high-souled patriot to whom rebellion was anathema. Though, in the early stages of the struggle, it is true that he was, in common with all his friends, as pedantically careful of precedent as was the King himself, he was already a conscious revolutionary by the time of the ship-money trial and, very probably, immediately after the death of Eliot. His muster of the trained bands of Buckinghamshire in 1634 (four years before the trial) was not merely a childish frolic. I do not mean, of course, that he deliberately strove for war as a means of ending the constitutional dispute, but merely that he had decided that, ultimately, force would be necessary and that he was perfectly prepared to resort to it. There is far more truth in the Royalist assertion that Hampden was the prime mover in the "mischief" than in the Whig disclaimer. And certainly, after his

attempted arrest, he strained every nerve to prevent peace without victory.

These considerations suggest the second point of this book. Materials for Hampden's early life are even scantier than are those for his closing years. Consequently everyone who has written of him has, to all intents and purposes, started with the ship-money trial. At that time he was forty-four and had only five more years of life left to him. Lord Nugent, for instance, in his *Memorials of John Hampden*, opens the fourth chapter of his first volume with the ship-money business and devotes practically the whole of his second volume to the eighteen months from January 1642 to June 1643. Such disproportion is fatal to any just understanding either of Hampden's career or of his character. The vital period is that before he emerged from comparative obscurity and was under the influence of Sir John Eliot. So I need not apologise that, in these pages, more space has been devoted to the earlier events in which Hampden was concerned, even though his own part in them seems to have been mainly that of a spectator.

The third point is that I have concentrated the story, as far as possible, on Hampden himself. Many great and famous names do not appear in this narrative, lest, in a biography as distinct from a general history, they should confuse rather than

help the reader. For the same reason I have confined the Civil War to a short space (though it is still too long for a just proportion). There seemed for instance, no reason to give, as Nugent does, a lengthy description of the battle of Edgehill, since Hampden was not in it.

A note on sources, containing some hitherto unprinted material, will be found on page 333. No statement of fact in the general history of the period has been made which cannot be authenticated, with the exception of two doubtful stories. Both concern Strafford and Pym. The story of their parting rests on the authority of Dr. James Welwood, William III's physician, who wrote some years after the event, and the suggestion that Pym faltered in his speech at Strafford's impeachment because he caught sight of his former friend is merely a romantic inference, which, though widely accepted, is dismissed contemptuously by Gardiner. Nevertheless, it seems probable.

Although this volume contains seven letters never before printed, and assembles many others together in order for the first time, I am only too conscious of the gaps in the narrative. My hope is that any readers who can inform me of additional material will be kind enough to do so, that it may be incorporated in a more authoritative life of one of the greatest of Englishmen.

the poet decided, some stanzas later, voicing in his compliments the heart of the English nation, which adored its Princess Elizabeth. The citizens of London had expressed their affection in practical form by giving her a collection of Oriental pearls worth £2000, while the country at large, which was not apt to be generous in responding to the

*More truth, more courage in these two do shine  
Than all thy turtles have, and sparrows, Valentine,*

daughter of James I, King of England. appropriate, of the Elector Palatine and Elizabeth, occasion was the marriage, on a day sufficiently encumbered by the Deanery of St. Paul's). The wrote the courtier-poet, John Donne (as yet un-

*This day more cheerfully than ever shine,  
This day which might enflame thyself, Old Valentine,*

“SHROVE SUNDAY” in the year 1613 fell upon St. Valentine’s Day.

“QUIET HOMES AND FIRST BEGINNINGS”



King's appeals for money, had subscribed without murmur over £20,000 to the aid levied for the nuptials of his eldest daughter.

On his part, James, a prince in intention if not in appearance, contrived to spend nearly three times that sum on the wedding festivities before the bankruptcy of the royal exchequer forced him hurriedly to abandon them. Already there had been masques and pageants and plays, among them *The Tempest*, the latest work, half play, half masque, by William Shakespeare, a playwright of no little repute who, at the moment, was living in retirement in the country. On the previous Saturday there had been a spectacle on a larger scale. Londoners had been regaled by a mock sea-fight on the Thames in the afternoon, followed by a gigantic firework display at night, which alone cost £9000.

Accommodation for the wedding ceremony itself was limited, since it was performed in the chapel of the Palace of Whitehall. Elizabeth, clothed in silver, crowned with gold, with pearls studding her long, lovely hair, was attended by sixteen bridesmaids – one for each year of her age. Her brother, Prince Charles, a grave boy of twelve, accompanied her to the altar, where, as the Archbishop of Canterbury murmured the irrevocable words, she laughed aloud – though whether for happiness (as

the spectators concluded) or from strain, it was impossible to determine.

The day indeed was tiring. The bride had to rest between the wedding and the subsequent ceremonies so accurately forecast in the poem:

*The feast with gluttonous delays*

*Is eaten, and too long their meal they prase.*

*The masquers come too late, and, I think, will stay,*

*Like Fairies, till the Cock crow them away.*

But for the King, feast, masque and merrymaking were too soon ended. Such occasions provided for him those rare moments of content which were surely an answer to the prayer of the eminent divines whom he had recently authorised to translate the Bible: "The Lord of heaven and earth bless Your Majesty with many and happy days that, as his heavenly hand hath enriched Your Highness with many singular and extraordinary graces, so You may be the wonder of the world in this latter age for happiness and true felicity."

Felicity it was for him, with arm round the neck of a robust minion, to totter on bandy legs among his guests, leering genially at them from bulbous eyes: or, seated at table, to drink loudly his Frontinack or Canary, whose dregs trickled back from his mouth's unshapely corners over his scanty beard on to his padded doublet: or to exchange

witty repartee, raucously in the Scots tongue, with the surrounding courtiers : or, falling silent, to contemplate with approval his exquisite hands, which, for fear of spoiling their softness, he never washed.

The Queen, whom he disliked and saw as seldom as possible, was absorbed in the masque, designed by Inigo Jones. She was an informed and sympathetic critic, for not only was masquing her passion but Inigo's first effort in this field had enabled her to satisfy one of her minor ambitions by blacking her face and arms and appearing before the astonished Court as a negress. Elizabeth had eyes for no one but her sixteen-year-old husband. But Prince Charles (whose reluctance to talk on account of his stammer made him the more keenly observant) watched the paternal model of kingcraft. He too would be King one day

At last ended that feast of St. Valentine which courtiers and cooks, poets and playwrights, actors and dancers, had striven to make so memorable. James, perhaps, would have prolonged it, and Donne, using a poet's licence, claimed its extension till the settling of wagers as to which of the bridal pair would first awake.

*This will be tryed tomorrow after nine,  
Till which houre, wee thy day enlarge, O Valentine.*

With this happy thought concluded one epithalamion. But there were hundreds more. The University of Oxford alone presented to Elizabeth a slim volume containing over 240, of which one was in Hebrew, a few in Greek and the rest in Latin. But it is doubtful whether she read them or noted among them the pious compliments of Dr. William Laud, President of St. John's, and the neat verse of Mr. John Hampden, an undergraduate of Magdalen.

John Hampden, at nineteen and in his last year at the university, was not sufficiently concerned with great events or affairs of State to suspect the quality of irony in things. His “spousal verse” concluded with the polite assertion that the offspring of so pleasing a marriage would be unequalled by that of any age or any nation. By what means should he foresee that thirty years later that offspring, Prince Rupert, was to lead the company of men that wounded him to death? How should his path cross that of the blood royal, and in hostility? Hampden's destiny, as it then seemed, was far other. He was an esquire, born to administer in a manner worthy of his name the vast estates which had become his as a child of three. It was said, indeed, that centuries ago a Hampden had struck a prince over a dispute at tennis. They sang the doggerel still :

*Tring, Wing and Ivinghoe  
From the Hampdens did go  
For striking the Black Prince a blow,*

but no one knew the truth of it. The land may have gone for that or another cause, but there was enough left to occupy all John's energies. In his own beloved Buckinghamshire he was lord of Great and Little Hampden, of Stoke-Mandeville and Kimble and Prestwood, of Dunton and Hoggestone and Hartwell. He owned, too, manors in Essex and Oxfordshire and Berkshire.

His descent was nobler than that of the royal house, for his pedigree stretched back unbroken to the days before the Conquest. In his family was a tradition of service to the State, from the time when John de Hampden had served in the Parliaments of Edward III, through the uneasy years of civil strife in the Wars of the Roses and through the restless days of Henry VIII, when Sir John Hampden commanded *The Saviour* in the King's fleet and accompanied his master to the Field of the Cloth of Gold.

Griffith, John's grandfather, though serving his country as Member of Parliament and his county as High Sheriff, as the custom was, devoted much of his energy to rebuilding Hampden House, where he entertained, with a magnificence in keeping with

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## “QUIET HOMES AND FIRST BEGINNINGS”

English. In composition, besides the weekly pastime of making Latin verses on a set subject, they exercised themselves in writing epigrams, eclogues, epitaphs and epithalamia in the same four tongues.

John had so far mastered his subjects that he matriculated to Magdalen at the age of fifteen. Though he was a studious pupil, it would be unwise to assume that he was overlearned. The curriculum was admittedly an ideal rather than a reality. It was intended to prepare the scholars for a University career where the classics were still the basis of education, and where Latin at least, besides being the conventional tongue in which they were taught, was often the language they used in conversation. It was, however, an incidental of the teaching which had perhaps the most important effects. There was assured to all a knowledge, which could lead only to admiration, of the great patriots of the ancient republics. This fact was noted and deplored by those of monarchist tendencies.

Yet, in spite of the preponderance of profane classicism, the basis of the Grammar School education was religious. The first work of the day was to read twelve verses of the Greek Testament. Twice every Sunday the boys attended Divine Service and were relentlessly catechised on the subject of the sermons on Monday morning. Moreover, the Founders of Thame had left it on record

enough to leave her, she brought up her two small sons, John and Richard.

John, who was to love the manor no less than had his father, finding there a refuge in times of stress, was born in 1594 in London, where the great years were to be lived. Nor did he spend much of his youth at Hampden, for he was sent as a boarder to the Free Grammar School at Thame to lodge with Richard Bouchier, the headmaster. It was the custom. "The Hampdens, while young, had been mostly bred in the said school of Thame and had sojourned either with the Vicar or Master," Anthony à Wood noted.

At school the day's work began at six (in the winter the pupils themselves had to provide the candles which lighted their labours) and ended at five, and it occupied forty-two weeks of the year. The ideal for which it strove was reflected in the sixth form curriculum, which assumed a thorough knowledge of Greek and Latin and provided for the study, three days a week, of Hebrew. The authors read were Hesiod, Homer, Pindar, Xenophon, Sophocles, Euripides and Aristophanes; Horace, Juvenal, Persius, Lucan, Seneca, Martial and Plautus. Then, for leisure hours, there were Cicero's *Orations*, Pliny's *Panegyrics* and Quintilian's *Declamations* whose models of oratory the pupils emulated by declaiming each week in Hebrew, Greek, Latin and



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that "we desire that the custom be observed of spending a quarter of an hour daily before dinner in reciting some chapter of the Old or New Testament in the English language, such as the master may think fit to select as suitable, whether for inculcating piety or for checking the frivolity of the young, to be clearly and distinctly repeated by one of the pupils who is best able to read it with ability and proper articulation."

Daily prayers also had been appointed, and night after night John heard, till he knew by heart, the *intercession* :

O Lord Jesus Christ, eternal wisdom of the Father, Thou who hast added to man's nature the benefit of teachableness, memory and understanding, hear our prayers. Give the help of Thy grace to our own natural endeavours, that we may the more readily learn true knowledge and sacred learning, which shall serve Thy glory.

In this atmosphere began his life-long friendship with Arthur Goodwin, in whose arms he was to die ; and here he first met William Lenthall, who, as Speaker of the House of Commons, was on a day of crisis to play no mean part in Hampden's life and England's history.

The young Puritans trained in this school grew up to fear God, and no person and no thing else. They were expected to be able to give reasons for

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their beliefs, because the conflict of faiths seemed still a matter of life and death. Within the living memory of the older men of that time, three hundred Englishmen, an archbishop among them, had been burnt to death because they refused to deny their creed at the bidding of a Catholic Queen. No longer than thirty years ago, the most powerful nation in the world had sent an “invincible” Armada to conquer England for the Pope and relight those fires. And the new generation had determined that never again should such things be. They trained their sons, as they had steeled themselves, to resist all forms of tyranny, of which the tyranny of the priest was the most deadly as it was the most dreaded. Protestantism was liberty and liberty Protestantism – an illogical intertwining, but so they saw it.

The backbone of their faith was the teaching of John Calvin, nor was it difficult to understand why such tenets in theological matters should breed an independent spirit in things political. Calvinism stressed the equality of all men in the sight of God ; if special honour were due to any, it was to the “elect” who, by God’s foreordaining before the beginning of time, were by His grace to be saved at the end of it. Nothing mattered but ultimate salvation, and as quite possibly a pauper was elected to be saved and a prince was not, such a

view of the nature of things had eventually notable repercussions in the lay world.

Calvinism, however, was less a creed in its own right than a conditioned reaction against a corrupt Catholicism. Predestination was primarily a protest. When men are moved in religious matters, it is not the official formulation of a doctrine that matters, but the way in which that doctrine appears to the untheologically-minded laity. Rome's teaching on the subject of the forgiveness of sins was as sane then as it is now – for, since the validity of absolution depends on the genuine repentance of the sinner (a point which only an omniscient Deity is in a position to decide), it made in reality no claim that the most ardent Protestant need have rejected. But by the time that the dogma had filtered down to the populace at large it was adequately represented by Tetzel's notorious distortion of it when selling indulgences for the dead – “the moment the money chinks in the box the soul flies upward from Purgatory.”

Against this prevailing belief that through the ministrations of a segregated class of men one could ensure one's salvation on a financial basis, Calvinism uncompromisingly asserted that no conceivable activity of man could alter the fixed plans of God. Even the combined efforts of the Church Militant, the Church Expectant and the Church Triumphant



THE OLD GRAMMAR SCHOOL AT THAME



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could not abate one jot or tittle of the predestined law. “Against the Catholic absolutism of the external Church, Calvinism had set the absolutism of the eternal decrees.”

Inevitably such beliefs, however valuable as a corrective, were vulnerable as a system. Also, the fatalism they implied was depressing, while certain of the “elect” were unable to convince their neighbours that their exalted status was due to the Divine Will rather than to their own opinions of what It should be. But the most obvious weakness of the creed was that it made God the author of sin. If He had predestined some men to be saved, He must first have predestined most men to be damned, and provided the means for the process. This was pointed out, forcibly, by a Dutch theologian, Jakob Arminius, who called in the doctrine of Free Will to redress the balance.

In 1609, the year that John Hampden entered Magdalen, Arminius died, but his teaching had already reached England, and during John’s four years’ residence at Oxford it became one of the main excitements of scholastic life. The man who was most attracted to it, and did his utmost to further it, was Dr. William Laud, a Fellow of St. John’s who became its President in 1611.

Laud, at thirty-eight, was a little man whose passion for law and order was accentuated by his

sense of grievance against the world in general. Introspective and superstitious, he confided to his diary the troubles that afflicted him through being unpopular at the University and neglected, more than his talents warranted, outside it. The ways of this world were past understanding. His semi-circular eyebrows gave his red face the appearance of a querulous enquirer living in a state of perpetual surprise. Well versed in ecclesiastical history and an able theologian, he in his heart disliked both Catholicism and Calvinism, and only wished to restore to the Church of England an order and ceremonies which were the traditional heritage of the Universal Church. Calvinism inevitably had made such practices not only redundant but offensive to the Deity ; the Prayer Book, much of which was Calvinistic in essence, had made them illegal ; and popular prejudice, which connected them with Popery and priestcraft, had made the observance of them dangerous. Undeterred by these considerations, Laud set to work, eagerly grasping at Arminianism as a logical excuse for ceremonial innovation. Why should he not ? Intellectually he could defend himself, and he was never one who could understand the limitations of logic or the perils of honesty when it is allied with tactlessness and temper.

Magdalen, Conservative and staunchly Puritan,



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resisted the new influence. It is doubtful whether, at the University, Hampden was much troubled by Laud : that strife was reserved till later. But for Oxford in general Arminianism became a burning question.

On “Shrove Sunday” in the year 1615, Laud preached a sermon pointing out that certain doctrines were common both to Catholicism and Arminianism. He also said that, in their divergence from the Church of England, “Presbyterians were as bad as Papists.” This so infuriated the Vice-Chancellor, who concurred in his brother the Archbishop of Canterbury’s opinion of Laud as “at least a Papist at heart and cordially addicted unto Popery,” that he retorted in a sermon preached in St. Peter’s on Easter Day. Laud was not in the congregation, but word of it was soon brought to him and he was persuaded by his friends to attend the repetition of it (as the custom was) in St. Mary’s on the subsequent Sunday.

And young Oxford crowded to witness the edifying spectacle of the Vice-Chancellor in the pulpit thundering at the President of St. John’s in the pew : “Might not Christ say, ‘What art thou? Romish or English? Papist or Protestant?’ or ‘What art thou? A mongrel or compound of both : a Protestant by Ordination, a Papist in point of Free Will, Inherent Righteousness and the like :

a Protestant in receiving the Sacrament, a Papist in the doctrine of the Sacrament?' What, do you think there are two Heavens? If there be, get you to the other."

Which pungent definition John Hampden did not hear, for by that time he and Arthur Goodwin had left behind them those irrecoverable undergraduate days, with their earnestness and frivolity their passionate loyalties and fiercer hatreds, and were engrossed in the law and London as students of the Inner Temple.

But he had escaped from the ecclesiastical storm at the University only to witness a no less bitter struggle in the legal world. In 1613, the year he was admitted to the Inns of Court, the head of his profession, Sir Edward Coke, was most unwillingly promoted from his office as Chief Justice of the Common Pleas to preside over the King's Bench. This was the King's punishment for his obstinate refusal to consider the law merely as a means of enforcing the royal will. James's view of the duty of judges in these matters was simple and sincere. "Encroach not on the prerogative of the crown," he ordered them in a famous speech. "If there falls out a question that concerns my prerogative or mystery of state, deal not with it till you consult with the king or his council or both; for they are transcendent matters. . . . That which concerns the

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mystery of the king's power is not lawful to be disputed ; for that is to wade into the weakness of princes, and to take away the mystical reverence that belongs unto them that sit in the throne of God.”

Coke, however, was of another opinion and his ascendancy over his colleagues – due in part to his unpleasant and overbearing personality, but chiefly to his encyclopædic knowledge and unrivalled abilities – was such that his fellow-judges dared not disagree with him even to please the King. His great rival, Sir Francis Bacon, had expressed his belief that the judges were “lions under the throne,” but Coke, who had spent his life in fighting for the supremacy of the common law, considered it the privilege of his profession not to pronounce that the King was right in all disputes with his subjects, but to ascertain whether he was right or not.

Such defiance could have only one end : he was dismissed. It was James's victory. Yet though his fall immediately reduced the remaining judges to subservience, his fight had inspired the young law-students with a new conception of their calling. He had clarified the issue for them and shown them that the law might be not a tool of the Crown but a safeguard of the subject.

When John Hampden at last returned to settle in his Buckinghamshire manor, those early conflicts in

Church and law had left an indelible mark on him. In neither, certainly, had he participated; the protagonists were far above him. Nor had he taken himself over-seriously, for, as was fitting for youth, "he had indulged to himself all the licence in sports and exercises and company, which was used by men of the most jolly conversation." But to escape the deeper issues of strife was impossible, even had he wished it. The atmosphere was too heavy with them. For good or evil they had moulded his thought, and, if the life of a country squire seemed for the moment to separate him utterly from the turbulent passions of the capital, the foundations were laid on which action could be built.

Now, however, there were things of more importance to consider. On Midsummer Day, 1619, in the little church of Pyrton, he was married to Elizabeth Symeon, with whom he was in love.

## II

### PARLIAMENTARY APPRENTICESHIP

**F**OR a year after his marriage John remained at Hampden, resisting all persuasions to return to London. His mother was anxious about it. To one of their kinsmen she wrote : “ If ever my son will seek for his honour, tell him now to come ; for here is multitudes of lords a-making . . . I am ambitious of my son’s honour, which I wish were now conferred upon him, that he might not come after so many new creations.”

Her son, however, was even more concerned about his honour. It was not so much the existence of the “ new creations ” that repelled him (though these were indeed numerous enough, since almost half the lay peers in the House of Lords owed their position to James) as the manner of joining their ranks. Peerages were for sale and he was rich ; only, in his opinion, the goods were too tarnished for the price. And, for him, the other two conventional roads to advancement were closed. His nature made it impossible for him either to flatter Buckingham or to take Buckingham’s way.

George Villiers, one of the best dancers in the kingdom, with some knowledge of music and fencing and a charm of manner developed by three years of travel in France, had, at the age of twenty-two, been brought to the King's notice by the Archbishop of Canterbury in the hope that his effeminate beauty would appeal to James. It did. Villiers was knighted, appointed gentleman of the bed-chamber and in the space of less than three years was created, in swift succession, Viscount, Earl and then Marquess of Buckingham. With an income of £15,000 a year, he was the second richest man in England ; with the King's favour, he was incomparably the most powerful. As virtual ruler of the realm, he indulged his inordinate vanity to the full, and made it sufficiently plain that any advancement depended on his good graces. Nobody could withstand him. The Prince of Wales quarrelled with him at tennis and was forced by his father to participate in a public reconciliation. An ambassador, waiting on the King for an important audience, was reproved in James's first words for hurting Buckingham's sore finger by a too-hearty handshake. The Privy Council, opposing one of his schemes, was admonished angrily by its infatuated sovereign : " You may be sure that I love the Earl of Buckingham more than anyone else. Christ had his John and I have my George."

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In private, James called him "Steenie," because he imagined that he resembled a painting of St. Stephen, and he, in his letters to his "Dear Dad and Gossip," signed himself "Your Majesty's dog and slave." But in the streets and ale-houses men asked: "Who rules the Kingdom? The King. Who rules the King? The Duke. Who rules the Duke? The Devil. Let the Duke look to it."

"The Devil" was the popular name for Gondomar, the Spanish Ambassador. Certainly his appearance was sufficiently Mephistophelian, with that dark beard and moustache, prominent nose and sneering mouth which the London crowds hated so well. A man of inflexible will and superb diplomacy, he had been sent to England expressly "to keep the King good," which, being interpreted, meant to see that abroad James made an alliance with Spain and at home relaxed the severity of the recusancy laws. In both he was successful. His ascendancy over "the wisest fool in Christendom" (as Henry of Navarre had nicknamed the pedantic James) was hardly less than "Steenie's." If Buckingham led, Gondomar drove, and, as both were agreed on the direction, their exact shares in the labour did not matter greatly. The goal was the marriage of Prince Charles to the daughter of the King of Spain.

This reversal of the traditional policy of England was resented bitterly by the country at large. Sir Walter Raleigh, who was beheaded, at Gondomar's instigation, for molesting the Spaniards in South America, was regarded as a national martyr. Men, forgetting his faults, remembered how, thirty years ago, when the Spanish fleet was on its way to invade England, Raleigh had travelled the country raising levies, and how, in the hour of danger, he had helped to defeat the Armada. Now, as they inhaled the smoke of that exquisite weed, tobacco, which he had brought them as a legacy from his travels, they argued among themselves, and were resentful that he should have been killed in order that, one day, a half-Spanish king should reign over them and the Inquisition be brought to England. But their outbursts were reduced to sullen *murmurings*. Gondomar saw to it that whoever spoke against Spain was punished – even in far-away Ipswich a preacher was imprisoned for painting a picture of the Armada – and he and Buckingham encouraged the King in his refusal to summon a Parliament in which the nation's voice could be heard.

In 1620, however, events abroad complicated the situation at home. The Spaniards invaded the Palatinate and drove out Frederick, the Elector, and Elizabeth, his wife. The affection which the



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country had always felt for these two, culminating in the demonstrations at their marriage, was now increased ten-fold. The misfortunes of their Princess Elizabeth and her children did more than occasion an outburst of genuine sympathy ; it pointed the way for a return to the old loyalties. The Catholic attack on Frederick, the Protestant champion of Europe, would surely bring England in full cry to his rescue. Now that James's daughter was driven from her home by the King of Spain, he could hardly continue negotiations for marrying his son to the Infanta. The hated project would be abandoned, for, as a writer of the time expressed it, " no one knows how two buckets can go down into the well at once."

But the people, in their simplicity, had left out of account Gondomar and the King. Had James possessed the vision of a statesman instead of the opportunist cunning of a politician, he could, at this moment, have made himself the arbiter of Europe, for Spain dreaded English intervention, and in the event even of enthusiastic preparation for it would have withdrawn immediately from the Palatinate. James, on Gondomar's suggestion, viewed the new situation merely in terms of the Spanish match, and was content to press for the evacuation of the invaded territory as a concession in the marriage-treaty. Thus the indignant people

discovered that, far from abandoning the objectionable idea, the King was pressing forward with it more eagerly than ever ; that, instead of preparing for war, he was doubly intent on preserving peace.

There was, nevertheless, family pride to be considered. At last it became clear, even to James, that as long as he did nothing more than send polite messages to Madrid, his daughter would remain dispossessed. A move of some kind was imperative. But a war meant money, and to get money he must summon Parliament.

Such a step was hardly agreeable. In spite of the fact that his peace revenue was greater than that which had served Queen Elizabeth in war-time, James was always heavily in debt. As Parliament was unsympathetic about it, he had recourse to as many extra-parliamentary methods of raising money as possible, and had contrived to avoid meeting the Houses for seven years. On this occasion there was some consolation in the fact that the Commons would undoubtedly be enthusiastic to vote him supplies for a war. What he would actually do with the money was, after all, his own affair. At least it would impress Spain and might even avert the necessity for war.

The elections were held during the Christmas holidays of 1620, and the assembly of Parliament brought John Hampden to London once more.

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On January 30th, 1621, he took his seat in the House of Commons as the elected member for the borough of Grampound. With him came Arthur Goodwin, returned for Chipping Wycombe.

In the Chapel of St. Stephen's he found a place, unobtrusively, near the door, not far from the foot of the ladder which served as stairway to the gallery above. From this point he faced the Speaker, magnificent in the great chair bearing the arms of England, behind which the Privy Councillors and other eminent persons crowded on five tiers of benches, until the hats of those on the topmost row were level with the Gothic window that overlooked the Thames. On either side of the hall the benches were uncomfortably full, in spite of the fact that many members, finding other diversions more to their taste on this visit from the country to the capital, did not trouble to attend the sittings.

For John, life in London was no novelty. If he visited his mother at her home in Westminster, and renewed his acquaintance with such friends of earlier days as were still in the city, his main pre-occupation was to discharge the duty of his house and to learn the practical ways of government, so that he could return, with an easy conscience, to the ordered life of his manor with his wife and their baby son, John. So, both from choice and habit, he was punctual in attendance at the sittings, which

began between eight and nine in the morning, and diligent in the course of them. His demeanour was noticed. He was appointed to serve on the committee on a Bill "against certain troublesome persons, relators, informers and promoters," and to manage a conference with the Upper House on the matter. Its object, severely practical, was to ensure that offences against penal statutes should be tried, not at Westminster, but by the local justice of the peace or the visiting judge at the assizes of the county where the offence was committed. It entailed much uninteresting work on details. For the rest, Hampden observed events and weighed men and causes in the balance of his mind.

He discovered, early in the session, that Parliament was jealous of all privileges that concerned it, either in the being or the making. In particular, it was scrupulous that no form of corruption in the constituencies should hinder the free election of representatives, and, when one such case was being examined, members of the committee complained that the room was so crowded with interested spectators that business was impeded.

The matter under discussion was the election of Sir Thomas Wentworth, the member for Yorkshire, who, it was complained, had not only intimidated electors by demanding from the Constables a list of the names of those who intended to support his

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rival, but on polling day had seen to it that about a thousand of them had been prevented from recording their votes. A narrow majority in Wentworth's favour saved the proud young baronet from the displeasure of the House which might, by precedent, have required him "to walk round about Westminster Hall in his doublet and hose, without a cloak, hat or sword," but the Constables who had furnished the lists were called to the Bar of the House and, meekly kneeling, were severely reprimanded by the Speaker. Hampden, sitting almost immediately behind the Bar, watched the ceremony curiously and noted, too, the fierce anger which Wentworth, forehead knitted in a scowl, eyes blazing, did not trouble to hide.

In such circumstances he first took his measure. Wentworth, his senior by a year, but of far greater experience, was a man of his own world. He too, after leaving the University, had spent a short time in the Inner Temple and, after completing his education by foreign travel, had settled for a space to administer his estates, as wealthy and extensive as Hampden's own. Both men were representatives of the younger generation which had grown to manhood in an age of transition – a generation critical of the King's government, though not, like their elders, lamenting by comparison the spacious days of the good old Queen, but deprecating the present

chaos because it held so little hope for future stability.

But there the resemblance between Wentworth and Hampden ended. Wentworth was a Northerner, forthright and direct : Hampden a Southerner, quiet and self-effacing. Wentworth, with the blood of the Border lords in his veins, was accustomed to the rapid decisions and unquestioned authority of a military caste : Hampden by temperament and training was at ease with the complexities which arise from the conflict of interests between free and peaceful men. Wentworth had so great a pride in himself that he craved obeisance even from his equals and showed contempt to his inferiors : Hampden treated all men with an unfailing courtesy which was one of his chief charms. Wentworth viewed the world clear-cut in terms of individuals and individuals in terms of rivalry ; those who stood in places which he coveted were his enemies, to be brought to ruin : Hampden knew the power which resided in men collectively and how by an interplay of motives and strange persuasions they could be swayed out of their true nature. Wentworth, short-sighted, had little respect for the lengthy processes of law and government, knowing how, on the one hand, they hindered precipitate action and, on the other, failed to check tyrannical resolution : Hampden, long-sighted, understood that law was

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stronger than the makers of it and that tradition alone could command a lasting loyalty. Wentworth considered a parliamentary career as a means of advancement : Hampden, as an opportunity to render service. To Wentworth, life was so simple a thing that all problems could be resolved by action characterised as "Thorough" : to Hampden it was so complex, with its conflicting loyalties and differing honesties, that he shrank from any action at all.

Eclipsing the excitement over Wentworth's election was the storm over monopolies. It began with the matter of inns — always a thorny question. Already, in a previous Parliament of the reign, there had been passed three Acts against drunkenness, while James's more recent complaint that the ale-houses had become the haunt of thieves and desperadoes had led to a change in the manner of licensing. To ensure stricter supervision, the matter had been taken out of the hands of the local authorities and entrusted to three commissioners appointed by the Crown. In theory such an arrangement might appear excellent. In practice, as the country gentlemen in Parliament assembled had good reason to know, it was a crying scandal from one end of the land to the other. The patent had been granted by Buckingham to a relation of his, aided by two nonentities who acted as screens

for his brothers. These courtiers, by selling licences indiscriminately as often and as exorbitantly as they could, had made fortunes. But the results from every other point of view were less satisfactory. Of the sixty newly allowed inns in Hampshire, sixteen had previously been closed by the local justices as disorderly houses – and Hampshire in this respect was typical of England as a whole.

In their attack on this and other monopolies, the Commons were not concerned to vindicate theoretical principles of the Constitution. They were deferentially advising the King, as was their duty, on a policy whose outcome in action they knew better than he did. The state of the country was far from satisfactory. The price of the protected commodities was scandalously high, while the decrease in the purchasing power of money aggravated the prevalent poverty. In spite of legal prohibitions gold was still leaving the country. Trade was practically at a standstill. The unemployment problem was a constant menace, and, during the session, four hundred able-bodied men of Wiltshire assembled before the justices demanding work or maintenance. They were peaceable enough, but Wiltshire was not the only county where such demonstrations occurred.

Remote from the capital and out of touch with its policies, the knights and squires might think, in



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common with the yeomen and merchants whom they represented, that the depression was the result of some inscrutable economic law. But, once in the House of Commons, moving among Londoners who had a shrewder idea of what was happening, they soon realised that the incompetent administration, combined with personal profiteering on a gigantic scale and disproportionate expenditure on luxuries, which characterised James's government, provided more cogent reasons for the collapse.

The first step to recovery was to restore trade to its normal channels and at the same time to punish the profiteers by destroying the monopolies. Determined to get to the root of the matter, they demanded an exhaustive enquiry into the whole question. Buckingham, thoroughly alarmed, made the King interfere, and offered the Commons a scapegoat in the person of his creature, the Lord Chancellor Bacon.

Unfortunately for Bacon, his ancient enemy, Sir Edward Coke, had emerged from his enforced silence, but this time as an elected representative of the people, safe from another dismissal by the King. As, years before, Hampden had watched his defeat from afar, so now he listened, day by day, as the veteran of seventy led an excited House to victory. Coke's vast knowledge of the law and the

constitution was of incalculable value to the Commons, for the most part unversed in either. In satisfying a private grudge, he rendered a public service. By reviving the custom of impeachment, which had fallen into desuetude for over a century and a half, he gave the country an object-lesson, which it did not forget, of the right of the Commons to overthrow a Minister of the Crown by bringing him to trial at the Bar of the House of Lords.

In the early days of the Parliament, too, there was a controversy over the Sabbath question. In a speech on the Bill for the stricter observance of that day, one of the members incurred the displeasure of the House by pointing out that their intended prohibition of dancing would involve disapproval of King David, who danced before the Lord on the Sabbath, as well as disobedience to King James, who had recently recommended the exercise in his *Book of Sports*.

But, above everything, there was the Spanish question and all that it implied. At the opening of Parliament, James himself had expressed the situation in a sentence : " This is the cause of all, that the cause of religion is involved in it ; for they will alter religion where they conquer." Here, at least, he voiced the feelings of the nation, which felt, rather than reasoned, that the Spanish triumph was a Catholic triumph, and the Catholic triumph

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meant the suppression of hard-won and much-cherished liberties. The Commons saw the King at one with them in this fundamental point. They could not know that three days later he would be assuring Gondomar that he was ready to live and die in friendship with the King of Spain, that the Puritans were the common enemies of both of them, and that he would welcome a reunion of Christendom under the spiritual headship of the Pope. But perhaps they sensed something of this typical Stuart trait. Eager as they were for war, they were reluctant to grant supplies until they had some assurance that the money would be used for that purpose. And, both inside and outside Parliament, feeling against the Spaniards in England and, as a consequence, against the Catholics ran dangerously high.

One morning in April, the sight of Gondomar passing down Fenchurch Street in his litter inspired a young apprentice to shout cheerfully : "There goes the Devil in a dung-cart," for which impudence, aggravated by knocking one of Gondomar's Spaniards into the gutter, he was sentenced to be whipped through the City at a cart's tail. As the punishment was in progress, a band of three hundred of his fellow-apprentices rescued him and carried him off to safety. The outraged Ambassador, hearing of this, complained to the Lord

Mayor, only to be informed coldly that it was not to Spain that account of the City had to be rendered. Thereupon James himself, in a towering rage, came down to the Guildhall and threatened to place a garrison in the City and seize its charter if the sentence were not immediately carried out on the offending boy. The apprentice was whipped to death.

Inevitably when, a few days later, the Commons heard that a Catholic barrister had rejoiced that the Elector Palatine and his wife had been "turned out of doors," they grasped at the opportunity of a counter-demonstration. Members rose in their places, each demanding a more savage punishment than the last. The case, however, did not lie within their jurisdiction, as the King was careful to point out, and they were denied the pleasure of seeing their would-be victim riding from Westminster to the Tower with his face to the horse's tail and bearing a placard inscribed, "A popish wretch that hath maliciously scandalized His Majesty's children."

It was hardly surprising that, after the summer recess, the Commons reassembled in a mood somewhat different from their initial amiability. Nor were matters eased by an order from James (who was enjoying himself at Newmarket) "to avoid all long harangues, malicious and cunning diversions,"

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and to postpone, till after Christmas, all business except that of granting him supplies.

Amid general excitement, Coke rose in a crowded House to deliver a diatribe against Spain. He dwelt chiefly on the days of his youth, when persistent attempts had been made to murder Queen Elizabeth in the interests of that country and the Catholic religion, but he deplored also the contemporary fact that at the Spanish Ambassador's house Papists could openly defy the recusancy laws and likened it to the Trojan Horse from whose belly issued the destroyers of the land. "Fifteen men harboured within the walls of Troy did the Trojans more hurt than ten years' siege did : the Papists, our enemies, are here in our bosom, so we are not in safety at home." He added that he saw no reason for a sudden grant of supply and advised the House to continue with the other business before it.

The effect produced by the old man's appeal was considerable, and if some thought it too splenetic and some disliked his habit of reminiscence, while many thought the war a question too important to brook delay, all were won over next day by the first great speech of a comparatively unknown member, John Pym.

That day, November 28th, 1621, was a memorable one for Hampden. Early in the morning the

Bill on informers, over which he had spent so much time and energy, was sent back from the Lords, embellished with thirteen amendments – which the Commons accepted without demur. His apprentice-work in the drudgery and compromise of parliamentary routine was over. With his mind thus relieved, he was free to concentrate on the great business of the hour and, as he listened to Pym, a new prospect suddenly opened before him. He knew, long before the speech was over, that at last he had found a leader. And the rest of the House, too, listened in admiration as the large, genial man, with his curly hair tousled untidily over his forehead, translated, with quiet lucidity, their own illogical and intolerant feelings into a reasoned policy for action.

In their fanatical outbursts against Catholics, the more thoughtful men were sometimes haunted in their minds by the King's suggestion that "men's consciences ought not to be forced, nor ought any man to suffer for his religion." A generation which put so high a value on liberty of conscience could not be altogether easy in refusing to concede the privilege it claimed. It might be true that the King's motive in enunciating an impracticable ideal was merely to justify a political move, but that did not dispose of the ideal. Yet, though reason and morality spoke for tolerance, instinct

clamoured for persecution. Logically, the connection of English Catholicism with Spanish imperialism might be indefensible, for had not a Catholic commanded the fleet against the Armada? But, illogically, the identification persisted.

Pym's achievement was that he reconciled these conflicting emotions by satisfying his fellow-members that their instinct was not unreasonable. He grasped the essential fact that, however tolerant the Protestant might be of the Catholic, the Catholic, by the very nature of his claims, could never be tolerant of the Protestant. He saw, moreover, that because of their creed the Catholics must employ every means in their power to ensure its triumph. In a sentence he crystallised the matter when he asked the House "by Petition to let the King understand that the execution of the laws against Papists forces not their consciences but prevents mischiefs." The reason for the recusancy laws was ultimately public safety. "If the Papists once obtain a connivance, they will press for a toleration; from thence to an equality; from an equality to a superiority; from a superiority to an extirpation of all contrary religions."

The petition for which Pym pressed was drawn up. In the course of it the Commons expressed boldly their opinion of the matter which was chiefly agitating the country and requested the

King that "our most noble prince may be timely and happily married to one of our own religion."

James, informed of it before the document was dispatched, wrote a furious letter saying that he had heard that his absence had "emboldened some fiery and popular spirits of some of the House of Commons to argue and debate publicly of matters far above their reach and capacity," and ordering that "none therein shall presume henceforth to meddle with anything concerning our government or deep matters of state, and, namely, not to deal with our dearest son's match with the daughter of Spain."

On the receipt of this missive the Commons continued in agitated discussion. The recusancy laws and the Spanish match paled into insignificance beside this attack on their freedom of debate. So late they sat that, for the first time, candles had to be sent for to light the House before they had drawn up the resolution in which they replied: "Your Majesty doth seem to abridge us of the ancient liberty of parliament for freedom of speech, jurisdiction and just censure of the House and other proceedings there . . . the same being our undoubted right and an inheritance received from our ancestors." With this they forwarded the original petition.

James retorted: "Touching your excuse of not



determining anything concerning the match of our dearest son, but only to tell your opinion and lay it down at our feet, first we desire to know how you could have presumed to determine in that point without committing of high treason ? ” As to the matter of freedom of debate, he concluded : “ We cannot allow of the style, calling it your ancient and undoubted right and inheritance, but could rather have wished that ye had said that your privileges were derived from the grace and permission of our ancestors and us.”

It was then that the Commons entered in the journals of the House a protestation that sounded the first alarm for a long and bitter struggle which was to be decided at last, not with words on the floor of St. Stephen’s, but in arms on the battle-fields of England. They asserted “ that the liberties franchises, privileges and jurisdictions of parliament are the ancient and undoubted birthright and inheritance of the subjects of England ” ; that they could freely discuss whatever policies seemed good to them and that, for such discussions, they enjoyed immunity from arrest.

James sent for the journals and, with his own hand, tore out the Protestation.

On the eve of the Epiphany, he was able to assure Gondomar that all was well again. On the morrow, Parliament would be dissolved. The

Spaniard smiled. Both were in good spirits. It was evening and they had dined together in the King's bedroom, James in night-cap and *deshabille*. Watching him now, as he fussily dressed for the masque, Gondomar warmed himself at the fire and was satisfied. Already he had written to his master :

It is certain that the King will never summon another Parliament as long as he lives, or at least not another composed as this one was. It is the best thing that has happened in the interests of Spain and the Catholic religion since Luther began to preach heresy a hundred years ago.

The King will no longer be able to succour his son-in-law or to hinder the advance of the Catholics. It is true that the wretched people are desperately offended against him, but they are without union among themselves and have neither leaders nor strong places to lean upon.

Besides, they are rich and live comfortably in their houses ; so that it is not likely that there will be any disturbance.

But, next day, John Hampden rode back to his riches and comfort, not altogether satisfied.

### III

#### INTERIM

**D**URING the session Hampden had seen how the Commons of England could protest against the King and his Ministers ; at the dissolution he discovered the price they had to pay for it. For if Parliament was jealous of its privileges, James, on his part, had no misgivings about his prerogative. He still held with unabated zeal the views he had expressed in the early days of his reign, when John was a small boy at the Grammar School : “ The state of monarchy is the supremest thing upon earth : for Kings are not only God’s lieutenants upon earth and sit upon God’s throne, but even by God himself they are called Gods.” So now, as soon as the dissolution was decided upon, he determined to punish “ the evil-tempered spirits who sowed tares among the corn ” by sending, among others, Coke to a close imprisonment in the Tower and ordering Pym to confine himself in his London house. Pym made no secret of his feelings on such matters, either now or later : “ I had

rather suffer for speaking the truth than that the truth should suffer for want of my speaking."

Punishment, however, could neither replenish the royal coffers nor provide money for a war, and as without Parliament he could get no supplies, James had recourse to the method of taxation ironically known as a Benevolence. Men were asked the amount of money which, out of the goodness of their hearts, they were willing to contribute to the King's need, and the authorities were instructed to see that it was paid as promptly as possible. But the instinct of generosity was not as potent as it might have been. James raised only a third of the sum he had anticipated and it took him nearly a year to do that. There were, too, unpleasant incidents—the case, for example, of Lord Saye. This factious nobleman, who, at forty, had not yet earned his nickname of "Old Subtlety," allowed his annoyance to outrun his discretion and roundly asserted that "he knew no law besides Parliament to persuade men to give away their own goods." For this impertinence, which was not without effect on his neighbours, he was committed to the Fleet Prison for six months.

His unfortunate *mot* had, nevertheless, clearly defined the issue. There *was* no law besides Parliament. For a century at least no one had thought of questioning the sovereign power of Parliament—of

the King, the Lords and the Commons acting together in agreement. That the constituent parts might be in disagreement had not been contemplated. In the event of it – which seemed imminent – the question must be answered : Where did the ultimate authority rest : with the King as executive or with the Houses as representative advisers ? Was the King legally entitled to execute policies which ran directly counter to the advice of his subjects ? The royal prerogative, instead of being the normal discretionary power allowed to the executive, was coming to signify merely the King's will in opposition to the Houses. And since only the King's will in conjunction with the Houses had hitherto had the force of law, the continued exercise of it would engender an unprecedented situation.

Unprecedented as it might seem, however, the rights and wrongs of it could be settled only by continual appeals to precedent, for the Commons were constitutionalists to a man and the idea of revolutionary innovation was no less abhorrent to them than it was to the King. Coke and Pym and Saye might be in prison, but they went there in the sure and certain belief that not they but the Crown had acted illegally. And Coke at least could produce precedents from memory to prove it.

In the quiet of his home, Hampden, free from the

distorting excitements of action, debated the situation. As a traditionalist trained in the law, he considered no means of dealing with it save those sanctioned by the past. At the same time, the young man was too shrewd a realist to misjudge the facts of the present. He was quite aware that ultimately sovereignty must be rooted in practical power. It was, indubitably, necessary to call in precedent to legalise the power, but to rely on precedent in the absence of power was a policy fit only for fools. Thus he saw immediately the importance of Saye's stand. The Houses' strength was the power of the purse ; as long as they could control supplies they were able, to some extent at least, to influence policy. But if the King could use his prerogative to raise sufficient money for his needs by extra-parliamentary methods, the Commons' power, whatever their privileges on parchment, was negligible.

If the importance of financial control was paramount, he saw, too, the necessity of strengthening the Commons by the election of men who were neither indifferent nor subservient to the Court policies. It was in this connection that he interested himself in the affair of the three Buckinghamshire boroughs, which was being investigated by a committee in the last Parliament but on which no decision had been pronounced at the time of the dissolution. Here was a matter which satisfied

both his instinct for the present and his reliance on the past.

One of his legal friends had discovered, among old documents in the Tower, the information that three hundred years previously Wendover, Amersham and Marlow had been represented in Parliament, although subsequently they were deprived of the privilege. As they were, however, boroughs by prescriptive right, a petition was preferred that their ancient and undoubted privileges might be restored. As they lay in the Hampden country, the success of the petition would mean the appearance of six new members of the anti-Court party in the House. Hampden himself intended to stand as one of the burgesses for Wendover, a tiny hamlet of scarcely more than a hundred houses, and, as he anticipated that the matter would be settled immediately on the opening of the next Parliament, he decided to withdraw from his Cornish constituency of Grampound and leave it open for some other candidate.

Meanwhile in Oxford, not far away, a sermon had again kindled the politico-religious dispute. It was Dr. William Laud, sensitive on the subject of University sermons, who drew the King's attention to it. Little Laud was now no longer the neglected President of St. John's but a rising star in the Court galaxy. He had been made Bishop of St. David's

and appointed, on account of his theological process, to controvert with a Jesuit in an effort to avert the submission of Buckingham and his mother to Rome. Moreover, he had been signally honoured by being chosen that spring to preach before James and the Court on the anniversary of the King's accession. He concluded an enthusiastic, though lengthy, tribute to his master with the unimpeachable sentiment that "this day, the anniversary of his crown is to all his loving subjects a day of joy and a day of hope . . . that he may go on a straight course from blessing others in this life to be blessed himself in Heaven."

It was, naturally, a source of some annoyance both to him and to the subject of his eulogy to find that three weeks later a young man in an Oxford pulpit, neglecting the obvious, if well-worn, comparison of James with David for godliness and Solomon for wisdom, took for his text King Ahab's persecution of the prophet Elijah and asserted that "it was lawful for subjects when harassed on the score of religion to take arms against their Prince in their own defence." The young man was seized for and committed to prison for two years, while to prevent any evil after-effects in the University no undergraduate was thenceforth allowed to take a degree unless he repudiated the obnoxious opinion. Also, by James's express order, divinity students



were prohibited from reading any Puritan theology.

Driven underground, discontent increased. Manuscript libels on the King were passed eagerly from hand to hand, and the departure of Gondomar (recalled hurriedly to Spain to outwit James's representative there) was the signal for an outburst of national rejoicing. But there was nothing else to rejoice at. The negotiations for the Spanish match were not abandoned, war on behalf of Frederick was not declared and Parliament was not summoned. The year 1622 dragged to its inglorious close. John remained at Hampden. In the autumn a daughter was born, whom he named Elizabeth after her mother.

In 1623, however, events quickened. Buckingham and Prince Charles, tiring of the delays in James's diplomacy, set off incognito to Madrid to woo the Infanta in person. The apprehension of the people of England was not allayed by the discovery that the Prince of Wales had thus voluntarily given his person as a hostage to Spain. Rumour succeeded rumour – the Prince had been murdered : the Prince had been converted by the Jesuits : the Prince had been secretly married. In point of fact the Prince had only promised to repeal the recusancy laws and to educate his children as Catholics, but this the country did not know. Nor did it know that Buckingham, by his behaviour, was

accomplishing in a few months what the excited protests of England had been unable to accomplish in as many years. The Spaniards, observing him impartially, decided that they "would rather put the Infanta headlong into a well than into his hands."

He had, in fact, soon tired of the expedition. At first the experience had been sufficiently entertaining. He had done his best to make a brave show – had written home to James instructing him which of his jewels to send out for them to wear, threatening coily if they did not arrive to suspend his own presents to his "dear Dad and Gossip" (these had already included four asses, five camels and an elephant) – but latterly things had become tedious. He could find nothing really amusing to do but to insult the Spanish women, and even that palled. When, in the autumn, James sent out a fleet to fetch them home, both "Steenie" and "Baby Charles" were as ready for it as was their entourage.

At the news that the Prince had landed at Portsmouth, still a Protestant and still a bachelor, the country went mad with joy. Bonfires blazed; bells rang; food and wine were distributed free in the streets of the city; condemned criminals were released. Buckingham discovered, much to his surprise, that he was the most popular man in England, and Charles was overwhelmed by this evidence of the nation's affection for him.

The Spanish match being abandoned, it was decided at last to break the treaties with Spain, and at the beginning of 1624 Parliament was summoned. The King, ageing and tired, his body racked with gout and rheumatism ; his spirit heavy at being forced to concede to his cold son and his temperamental minion what he had so steadfastly refused to his Parliament ; his mind uneasy at the ruin of his life's diplomacy, was a pathetic figure. His speech from the Throne was conciliatory, as he invited the Houses to discuss the matter which he had so vehemently forbidden them to mention two years before. He made no attack on their privileges and even abandoned his original plan of sending Coke on State business to Ireland in order to prevent him taking his seat in the Commons.

That fierce old man was in his place when the session opened, listening to Buckingham's version of events in Spain. He decided that " never any man deserved better of his King and Country." Pym, too, was satisfied, for the narrative made clear that connection between English Catholics and foreign powers which had prompted his original protest. Wentworth was less content. Jealous of Buckingham's power, he was not altogether displeased to find him looking lean and yellow after sickness ; contemptuous of the people, he disliked the adoption of a policy which would be " the great joy and

exaltation of all the cobblers and other bigots and zealous brethren." But he said nothing. He was trying to school himself to "circumspection, patience and, above all, silence." Hampden was not in the House, for the matter of Wendover was still undecided, but Arthur Goodwin watched carefully the proceedings to report them to his absent friend.

The most notable, from their point of view, was the maiden speech of Sir John Eliot. From this thirty-two-year-old country member, "a Cornishman born and an esquire," the Commons heard such oratory as they had never known. The splenetic thunder and learning of Coke, the reasoned exposition of Pym, the explosive directness of Wentworth, were familiar to them. But in Eliot's speech there were qualities that no other had, just as in the speaker there were virtues which none other shared. He possessed Wentworth's vitality, though tempered with humour; Pym's understanding, untainted by demagoguery; Coke's force, but free from prejudice.

He was a friend of George Villiers, whom he had met in France when both were unknown youths in search of the world. When Villiers became Buckingham he secured for him a knighthood and the post of Vice-Admiral of Devon. In discharge of his duties in this capacity Eliot had recently arrested

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a pirate. For doing so he was confined in the Marshalsea prison. He was a simple man and did not know that the pirate was protected by the King's secretary. He had to stay in the Marshalsea until Buckingham returned from Spain and released him.

Now, having come to Westminster, it was for him a fortunate circumstance that his patron should be at last popular with Parliament, for so he was spared the sorrow of a divided loyalty. Strong as was his affection for, and gratitude to Buckingham, his devotion to the Commons was still stronger. With the eyes of a visionary he saw the loyalties and hopes and fears and sorrows of all the people of the land gathered in the confines of St. Stephen's. When the Commons spoke, it was the voice of England. They were the body, and the King was the spirit by which it moved, so that whoever dared to come between those two — Buckingham or another — committed the ultimate treachery.

At this moment, when it seemed that both were reconciled and bent in common effort to the same purpose, Eliot rose to remind his fellow-members of less happy days. Even in the flush of their new enthusiasm, they should reaffirm their liberty of speech. For, without that, how could the King be advised truly? "Much more for his sake than for ours, it behoves that such liberty be allowed."

The Commons, though responsive to idealism, were for the most part practical men, anxious to proceed with pressing business. They assented, and referred the matter to a committee in whose labyrinths it was lost. But the impression made by Sir John Eliot remained.

That was at the end of February. It was not until May 4th that the House had time to consider franchises and to decide that "Amersham, Wendover and Marlow, having established their ancient rights by proof, shall send burgesses to serve in this present parliament." Hampden was ready. But before the end of the month Parliament was prorogued, never, as events had it, to meet again.

The Commons had voted £300,000 for the war and in the summer ten thousand volunteers crossed to Holland to fight for Protestantism. They were not enough. Count Mansfeld, the ablest general of the Elector Palatine, came to England to collect twelve thousand more men as an expeditionary force. By press-ganging unimportant men from civil life, emptying the gaols of their less savoury inhabitants and tempting lawless vagabonds with plunder, he succeeded. This "rabble of poor men" proceeded to Dover, unwilling and unpaid – though Mansfeld had received £85,000 in three months with which to pay them. It was the dead of winter. Being without food or proper clothes, they not

unnaturally rioted and pillaged the farms in the countryside. A threat to hang the Mayor of Dover and burn the town resulted in the declaration of martial law, without any marked effect.

Buckingham, as Lord High Admiral, had neglected to provide sufficient ships to convey them across the Channel and, as Foreign Minister, had failed to get permission for them to land in France. At Calais, which they reached at last, they were not allowed to disembark. They proceeded to Holland, where, at first, they met a similar fate. There was no food ; plague broke out ; the men, penned in like rats but without even straw to cover their naked limbs, died in hundreds – “ they were thrown into the sea by multitudes, insomuch that scarce a third part of the men were landed.” The survivors fared no better. The army melted away. “ All day long,” wrote one of the colonels, “ we go about for victuals and bury our dead.”

The news of the disaster reached James a week before he died from tertian ague aggravated by over-indulgence in fruit and wine. As Laud said : “ Clemency, mercy, justice and holding the State in peace have ever been accounted great virtues in kings and they were all eminent in him. . . . His rest, no question, is in Abraham’s bosom, and his crown changed to a crown of glory.”

## IV

### BATTLE JOINED

**T**HE new King, an elegant young man of twenty-four, was sufficiently a foil to his eccentric father. James's Court, lax in manners and easy of access, was transformed outwardly by a rigid etiquette, based on the inaccessibility of the sovereign, and inwardly by the new fashion set by the temperance, chastity and piety of Charles. Ambassadors and counsellors, inured to interminable loquacity, found now, in the royal presence, a taciturn graciousness. Ministers discovered determined purpose where before there had been only apologetic inaction. The most vulgar Court in Europe had as its new head a patron of the arts. And outside the small circle of those who came into personal contact with him, the country at large saw a model prince already popular on account of his foreign policy in Spain and additionally approved of for his athletics.

It occurred to no one in those early days of enthusiasm to notice that all Charles's virtues were negative and that most of them resulted, like his



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incurable indolence, from the fact that he was under-vitalised. His chastity and temperance were the outcome less of desire curbed than of desire absent. If he was punctilious in his observance of forms and ceremonies, it was because he feared the personality of others and distrusted his own. He turned to religious observance as an escape from living, and to art as an antidote to life. His silence, due originally to his stammer, masked not profundity of thought but a dullness so complete that he was never guilty of an original idea. James, genuinely interested in subjects so diverse as theology, witchcraft and tobacco, had not brooded over his prerogative in private, even if he had over-emphasised it in public. With Charles the prerogative was an obsession, conditioning both his most and his least amiable traits. From it sprang his dignity, which all men saw and applauded, and his treachery, which was more gradually understood.

To have described it as "treachery" to Charles himself—had anyone dared—would have evoked incredulous amazement. He prided himself on his unswerving integrity, having on one occasion remarked: "I cannot defend a bad nor yield in a good cause." His difficulty was that he was King and therefore had no equals. To his subjects he was required to tell no more than he deemed it good

for them to know, and, if they showed signs of unwarranted inquisitiveness, to take refuge in diplomatic fabrications. Moreover, when he gave his word as a man dealing with other men (a situation which, unfortunately, he could not always escape), he felt under no obligation, as King, to keep it. In fact, to imagine that one could speak to the King as man to man – and therefore to presume that the results of any such conversation should be valid – savoured of high treason.

There was one man and one man only, all his life, to whom Charles opened his heart and gave his love – Buckingham. After the boyish resentment against his father's favourite, he succumbed entirely to his charm and found in him an idol for hero-worship. To James, the Duke had been an amusing plaything, whose whims must be indulged, indeed, but with a half-humorous tolerance which was not wholly trusting. To Charles he was friend, guide and model, the epitome of talent and wisdom. James found a minion, and his son turned him into a minister.

Another man, on a different plane, gained favour with the new King. Charles, "the idol of schoolmasters and the despair of statesmen," discovered in Dr. William Laud an ideal pedagogue. Into his fussy hands were entrusted, henceforth, Church affairs, and less than ten days after James's death

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he had provided his master with a list of the clergy of England, each name marked with either an O or a P, so that the " Orthodox " (in Laud's eyes the Arminians) might be given preferment and the Puritans passed over. This prelude to the persecution of Puritanism could have come at no more unfortunate time. The political fear of the Catholics had driven many irreligious men to profess Puritan sympathies. Leaders of the anti-Court party, like Eliot and Pym, found in their religion their strength for action, their justification, and their solace in punishment. The populace, to whom similarity of outward ceremonial suggested a synonymy of thought, resented Arminianism as an approach to Popery (Laud had already set fiercely Calvinistic Scotland ablaze by wearing vestments on a visit there) and the conservative country gentlemen had no taste for innovating practices in their parish churches.

The religious tension was not lessened by Charles's marriage by proxy, before his father's funeral, to the fifteen-year-old French princess, Henrietta Maria. She landed in England in May, and was received with every mark of personal loyalty. " If all the malice of the world were infused into one eye," said Laud, " yet it could not see anything whereby to disparage her." Nevertheless she was a Catholic. She was, certainly, better than the

Spanish Infanta – but not vastly. Her advent was heralded by the grant of a special pardon to twenty priests for their offences against the recusancy laws, and the dispatch of three thousand letters to officials all over the country ordering them not to put those laws into execution against others. The Queen was allowed openly to hear Mass in her chapel in Somerset House, and, to proclaim to all the world the efficacy of this new alliance, English ships and men were lent to the French king to help him to subdue the Protestants of La Rochelle.

Meanwhile preparations continued for the Spanish war. Ten thousand men were press-ganged to serve as soldiers with the fleet assembling at Plymouth for an unknown destination. The memory of Dover, thus aroused, produced martial law at the outset. It was more important that the memory of Buckingham's exploits as War Minister produced a lively distrust of his intended leadership.

Parliament met in mid-June and Hampden took his seat as burgess for Wendover. In spite of the fact that the plague was raging in London, claiming a death-roll of nearly two hundred a week, he had never known the House so uncomfortably crowded, and, in conversation with his friends from other constituencies, he learnt that elections had never been so hotly contested. All were anxious to see the young King and assure him of their loyalty.

Charles's short speech, promising to maintain the Protestant religion and asking for supplies for the war, was well received at the beginning but, as no indication was given of the actual sum required or of the manner in which it was to be spent, and as, moreover, the mismanagement of Mansfeld's expedition and the possible implications of the Catholic marriage gave rise to a certain uneasiness, their enthusiasm was tempered the more they reflected on it. Eventually they expressed their considered disapproval, both of the King's reticence and of his policy, by voting him no more than £140,000, which was about a tenth of what he needed to fulfil his obligations to his continental allies.

The smallness of the subsidy was followed by another blow. It had always been the custom to grant the King, on his accession, the duties on imports and exports (known as tonnage and poundage) for the duration of his reign. The money was ostensibly devoted to guarding the seas. Now the Commons decided that, in order to give time for an enquiry into the practical results of the "guardianship" of the pirate-infested Channel, as well as to decide some theoretical points connected with the duties, tonnage and poundage should be granted for one year only. The Bill sent up to the Lords to this effect was unaccountably dropped and

Charles found himself without any legal right whatever to these hereditary dues. As the need for money was pressing, he raised them as usual. He exercised his prerogative.

The plague continued with such virulence that, within a week or two, members began to return to the country in crowds and left only sixty men to bring the session to a close. In the topics of discussion, Hampden noticed a curious resemblance to the events of his first parliament. A petition on religion, again prepared by Pym, was forwarded to the King, and once again Sir Thomas Wentworth was accused of having interfered with the course of his election. But this time the outcome was different. The petition was graciously received and the enforcement of the recusancy laws promised, and Wentworth's election (gained on this occasion by seeing that the poll was closed as soon as it showed signs of going against him) was declared invalid.

After a fortnight's adjournment, Parliament reassembled at Oxford and, on August 1st, opened with an incident which puzzled Sir John Eliot. On July 11th the King had given his solemn promise about the religious enactments. The House was now shown the copy of a pardon granted to a Jesuit, "expressed in terms of unusual latitude." It was dated July 12th. After a short silence, in which the faithful Commons pondered the inference, Eliot

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rose to remark : " I cannot think that this pardon we have seen issued from the King ; or, if it did, that he rightly understood it. I cannot believe he gave his pardon to a Jesuit and that so soon upon his promise to us." The explanation that the pardon was promised before July 11th, as a concession to the French Ambassador, was a remedy which merely reminded men of Gondomar.

On the King's further demand for money for the war, the House, disapproving of continental entanglements and above all of Buckingham, started to debate the entire question. In the course of it the Duke was mentioned by name. Charles immediately dissolved Parliament.

Hampden returned home in dejection. His high hopes of the new king were unfulfilled. Nothing had changed. Buckingham still ruled ; the conflicting views on the question of the prerogative were still unreconciled ; and the cleavage between Crown and Commons, as deep as ever, held no prospect for the future but the certainty of strife.

What pleasure he had found in the session had been personal. He had met Pym again and, admiring his skill and strength, confirmed his first impression of the man. And, chiefly, he had fallen under the spell of Eliot, in whom he recognised a greater than Pym. To the Cornishman he gave the immediate response of one who instinctively recognises

in another qualities of mind and heart which demand an unquestioning surrender. Eliot, on his part, found in Hampden an idealism and a breadth of outlook, combined with shrewdness in practical affairs and industry in discharging them, which marked him for intimate friendship. The circumstance that Pym was more particularly associated with Wentworth, whose energy and directness especially appealed to him, made Hampden the more susceptible to Eliot.

After the dissolution, Eliot, as Vice-Admiral of Devon, watched the fleet at Plymouth prepare for an expedition to attack Cadiz, while Hampden, in the heart of the country, considered the amount at which he had been assessed as his share in paying for it. The tax demanded from Buckinghamshire for the subsidy granted by Parliament, with an additional loan, raised under the Privy Seal, was £3,052, of which Hampden's portion was £13 6s. 8d. Certainly the amount, for a man of his substance, was small, yet in proportion to other demands it was unfair enough to excite comment. One landowner, writing to another, remarked: "I do think Mr. John Hampden to be £13 6s. 8d. and his mother £10 a harder rate than I find upon any other." Hampden, seeing no reason why he should be singled out for special treatment, disputed the case. He won his point and paid only £10.



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At Plymouth the fleet and the pressed soldiers mustered. The King in person went down with Buckingham to stimulate their loyalty, and the Vice-Admiral of Devon learned to hate his former friend. Eliot saw the remnants of a once-great Navy which had crumbled to pieces under Buckingham's administration, and knew that the fault lay with the incompetent leaders and dishonest contractors appointed by his patronage. He did not forget, indeed, that when the Duke had been appointed Lord High Admiral seven years ago he had made an honest attempt to remedy the fifteen years of peculation and neglect in which James had turned Elizabeth's fleet, "fit to go anywhere and do anything," into a spectacle too pathetic for laughter. But neither did he forget that Buckingham's early enthusiasm had soon languished, and that his system had proved only a little less corrupt and inefficient than the one it had replaced.

On this present venture, Buckingham himself was, as Eliot put it, "held too precious to be adventured in a voyage." The actual command was entrusted to an Admiral and Vice-Admiral who, though competent soldiers, had never been to sea, aided by a Rear-Admiral whose only qualification was that he was Buckingham's brother-in-law. The ships were unseaworthy and much of the tackle useless. The *St. George*, as Eliot knew, was using

sails which had served the old *Triumph* in the fight against the Armada nearly fifty years ago, and shrouds which had come from the old *Garland*—"all stark rotten." Even the ships in slightly better repair were in charge of officers so incompetent in the management of them that they lost sails and spars as they went along. The Admiral did not even know the names of his ships, which, having no plan of formation, jostled together helplessly and collided with one another when they were not deserting or, in defiance of orders, chasing imaginary enemies.

The victualling was worthy of the rest of the provision. Beer leaked from the casks and came up in the ships' pumps, so that the men were reduced to drinking coarse cider "that stinks worse than carrion." The food, of which there was not enough for adequate nourishment, also stank "so as no dog of Paris Garden would eat it." By the time the fleet arrived at Cadiz, sickness and death were such that there were not enough men to keep the watches on several of the ships, and on the *St. George* there were only ten men fit for duty.

Disease had decimated a conscript force of which, at the outset, according to an official estimate, "the number of lame, impotent and unable men unfit for service is very great," and the survivors had no stomach for fighting. Fortunately for them it was

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not necessary. At sea they missed the Spanish treasure-fleet from Mexico, which they had been sent out to intercept, and on land they found no enemy except wine-casks, whose contents reduced them to a state of lunatic drunkenness. An examination of the fortifications of Cadiz dispelled any idea which might have been entertained of an attack on them, and one by one the ships sailed home, making what speed they could and entering any port into which they were lucky enough to drift.

In October, Eliot had seen them set out ; in December, he watched them return. Three days before Christmas, he wrote an official letter to the authorities :

“ There is now to be buried one, Captain Bolles, a landsman, who died since their coming in, and with much grief expressed the occasion of his sickness to be the scarcity and corruption of the provisions. The soldiers are not in better case. They are in great numbers continually thrown overboard ; and yesterday fell down here seven in the streets. The rest are most of them weak and, unless there be a present supply of clothes, there is little hope to recover them in the counties where they are lodged.”

His mind was made up. One thing he now saw clearly. At whatever cost, Buckingham must go. Parliament, it was rumoured, would meet in about a month's time. The King was to be crowned at

Candlemas and would immediately afterwards summon the Houses. Eliot consulted tentatively with the other leaders about the possibility of impeaching the Duke, and to Hampden he entrusted the task of drawing up a list of the points on which such action might be grounded.

Hampden, though he lacked the desire or the ability to play a leading part, was grateful that he should thus be associated with the chief business of the coming session and glad to be of service to his friend. Quickly he wrote out a rough draft of "The Causes." It included : " (1) The increase of Papists and the countenancing of them. (2) The narrow seas and the coasts have not been guarded since the breach of the treaties with Spain. (3) The plurality of offices in any one man's hand. (4) The intercepting, the unnecessary exhausting and misemploying the King's revenue. (5) The sales of honour in general. (6) The conferring of honour upon such whom the King's revenue doth maintain. (7) Buying of places of judicature in the commonwealth. (8) The delivery of our ships into the hands of the French which were employed against Rochelle. (9) Impositions upon commodities in general both native and foreign without assent of Parliament. (10) The misemployment of the money given by the act of parliament and not employing the money according to the four ends

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expressed in the act." To these he added, but on reflection crossed out : " A cause of stop of trade."

So affairs stood when Laud, after an effort to alter the form of the Coronation Oath so that it should stress the King's authority at the expense of the nation's will, crowned Charles in Westminster Abbey, on February 2nd, 1626. On the 6th, he preached a sermon at the opening of Parliament, informing his hearers that " God, the King and the Church – that is, God, His Spouse and His Lieutenant – are so near allied that no man can serve any one of them truly but he serves all three." It was the latest doctrine.

Charles had every confidence in the new House of Commons, as he had appointed six of the more factious members in the previous one, including Coke and Wentworth, sheriffs of their respective counties, in order that their duties at home should prevent their reappearance at Westminster. " The rank weeds of Parliament are rooted up," wrote one of his advisers, " so we may expect a plentiful harvest." The main result of the manœuvre was to leave Sir John Eliot undisputed leader of the House in the absence of Coke.

It was not, however, until May 8th that the actual impeachment of Buckingham was commenced and the eight " managers " of it, including Eliot and Pym, appeared in the House of Lords to

read and explain the charges against "George, Duke, Marquis and Earl of Buckingham, Earl of Coventry, Viscount Villiers, Baron of Whaddon, Great Admiral of the Kingdoms of England and Ireland and of the Principality of Wales, and of the Dominions and Islands of the same, of the Town of Calais and of the Marches of the same, and of Normandy, Gascoigne and Guienne, General, Governor of the Seas and Ships of the said Kingdom, Lieutenant-General, Admiral, Captain-General and Governor of His Majesty's Royal Fleet and Army lately set forth, Master of the Horse of our Sovereign Lord the King, Lord Warden, Chancellor and Admiral of the Cinque Ports, and of the Members thereof, Constable of Dover Castle, Justice in Eyre of the Forests and Chases on this side the river Trent, Constable of the Castle of Windsor, Gentleman of His Majesty's Bedchamber, one of His Majesty's Most Honourable Privy Council in his realms both in England, Scotland and Ireland, and Knight of the most Honourable Order of the Garter."

This person smiled serenely as the case against him was opened by the rhetorical Sir Dudley Digges, whose passion for metaphor was only less genuine than his belief that he used "plain country language." The monarchy, he considered, might be likened to the creation, the King to the sun, the

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Lords to the stars, the Commons to the earth, the clergy to the fire, the judiciary to the air – and Buckingham to “a prodigious comet.”

At this Buckingham might well laugh, but as the case proceeded, through the pungency of Pym to the concluding indictment by Eliot, he was less amused.

“He intercepts, consumes and exhausts the resources of the Crown,” declaimed Eliot, his voice vibrating with anger, “not only to satisfy his own lustful desires but the luxury of others ; and, by emptying the veins the blood should run in, he hath cast the body of the kingdom into an high consumption.

“Infinite sums of money and mass of land exceeding the values of money, contributions in Parliament have been heaped upon him and how have they been employed? Upon costly furniture, sumptuous feasting and magnificent building, the visible evidences of the express exhausting of the State.’ And yet his ambition, which is boundless, resteth not here but, like a violent flame, bursteth forth and getteth further scope. Not satisfied with injuries and injustice and dishonouring of religion, his attempts go higher, to the prejudices of his Sovereign, which, in plain, is his practice. The effects I fear to speak and fear to think. . . .

“My Lords, I have done, YOU SEE THE MAN.

Only this which was conceived by the knights, citizens and burgesses should be boldly by all spoken – that by him came all these evils, in him we find the cause, and on him we expect the remedies ; and to this we meet your Lordships in conference, to which your wisdom invites us, so we cannot doubt but, in your Lordships' wisdom, greatness and power, he shall in due time find judgment as he deserves."

The case against this latter-day Sejanus was concluded. It had lasted three days.

Charles, remarking, " If he is Sejanus, I must be Tiberius," asked Laud to compose a short speech for him to deliver to the peers. He spoke it next day, and reminded their Lordships of the necessity of " preserving the honour of the nobility against the vile and malicious calumnies of those in the House of Commons who had abused the Duke."

Meanwhile the Commons were proceeding with their ordinary business when Hampden noticed Eliot and Digges leaving their places in response to a request for them at the door. Hearing the message, they went out, and, as they did not immediately return, he concluded that they had been summoned to attend to some detail connected with the impeachment. By lunch-time they were still absent, and the news which was already being discussed in the streets of Westminster had found



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its way into the House. Eliot and Digges were in a cell in the Tower of London.

As soon as rumour gave place to certainty, the Commons rose in confusion from their benches, with cries of "Rise ! Rise ! Rise !" In vain did Pym plead for the situation to be considered quietly. He could not make himself heard above the tumult, and the House broke up with a refusal to sit in the afternoon.

Next morning, when the Speaker stood up to open the business of the day, he was greeted with cries of : " Sit down ! No business till we are righted in our liberties." The King's message that the two members were imprisoned for having hinted at the popular rumour that Buckingham had hastened King James's death, and his additional warning : " Move not his Majesty by trenching on his prerogative lest you bring him out of love with Parliaments," produced such annoyance that the Commons hardly restrained themselves from forcing the bearer of it to ask pardon on his knees at the Bar of the House.

The excuse given for the arrest was too flimsy to bear investigation, and Digges was released almost immediately. But Eliot remained in the Tower for a week, while his study was broken into and ransacked and himself searched and interrogated in an effort to discover an idea upon which a charge of

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The excuse given for the arrest was too flimsy to bear investigation, and Digges was released almost immediately. But Eliot remained in the Tower for a week, while his study was broken into and ransacked and himself searched and interrogated in an effort to discover an idea upon which a charge of

some sort could be preferred against him. The effort failed, and on May 20th he was again in his place answering certain objections which had been taken to his speech against Buckingham. The King considered, for instance, that the manner of his address had been almost as reprehensible as the matter. He had actually referred to the Duke as "the man." Eliot apologised for having thus, for brevity's sake, shortened the Duke's title, but explained that the term "man" had been applied to Cæsar and Alexander, so that it implied no dishonour to Buckingham, who was not yet, as far as he was aware, a god.

Then the members turned to more weighty matters and declared that, while they were anxious to grant an ample revenue to the King as soon as he had redressed the grievances of which they complained, they felt bound to affirm the illegality of tonnage and poundage when levied, as it had been recently, by the King alone without the consent of Parliament.

Four days later an unexpected occurrence brought matters to a head. The Chancellorship of the University of Cambridge fell vacant. Laud, realising the importance of having in that position an opponent of the Puritans, and Charles, wishing to give a practical demonstration to the Commons of his affection for Buckingham, decided that the

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Duke must have the office. Pressure was exercised in the University, and, after a not impartial scrutiny, Buckingham was declared elected by 108 votes to his Calvinist opponent's 103.

The Commons, in the face of this gratuitous annoyance, pressed on with their remonstrance against the Duke. The King retorted that, unless they put aside their other business and granted him money within a week, he would "use other resolutions." Their answer was to reaffirm the policy from which they had never deviated – the King should have all the money he needed as soon as Buckingham no longer had the spending of it. Charles dissolved them and burnt the remonstrance which was their manifesto to the country.

But the need for funds was desperate. In addition to the war with Spain, Charles, having quarrelled with his wife, was rapidly drifting towards war with France, and he was heavily in debt to his uncle, the King of Denmark. He endeavoured to raise a loan of £100,000 from the City of London, on the security of the Crown jewels, but the City would not lend where it saw no prospect of recovering the debt. He then asked for a "free gift," but the first attempt to collect it in Westminster Hall gave rise to excited shouts of "A Parliament! A Parliament!" and a wholesale refusal to contribute. At last he determined on a forced loan,

and sent out a circular explaining that Parliament, having led him into a foreign war, now refused him the means to pay for it and that in consequence he was demanding the money directly from his faithful subjects. Commissioners were appointed to collect it and instructed to bind over, to be dealt with by the Privy Council, any who refused to pay.

At first the proceedings, confined to London and the Home Counties, met with a measure of success. It was not till October (in which month the Council pronounced Sir John Eliot to be unworthy to hold the post of Vice-Admiral of Devon and bestowed the office on the man responsible for victualling the Cadiz expedition) that a more general application was made. Unfortunately for Charles the judges chose that moment for their refusal to acknowledge the legality of the loan and, in spite of the King's instant dismissal of the Chief Justice, persisted in their unseemly attitude. The news spread. Sixteen peers—Lord Saye, in spite of his previous experience, prominent among them—refused to lend a farthing, and many country gentlemen, who had already promised subscriptions, withdrew them.

Hampden at last found himself in a position where he must take independent action and make a choice which would commit him irrevocably. The motto of his house was "*Vestigia nulla retrorsum*"—"No way back"; and he who has no retreat must select

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his path with care. But if, outwardly, the decision demanded seemed instant, the preparation for it had been lengthy, and in his own mind he was committed long ago. Because he was clear-sighted on the underlying issues, he was equally undeceived as to the probable consequences of refusal. His name would be publicly known as one who was in opposition to the King's policy and he would be marked down for the punishment which, sooner or later, was certain. But there could be no hesitation now that the judges' decision had established where the rights of the matter lay. He declined to contribute to the loan.

On January 29th, 1627, he was summoned to London to answer in person to the Privy Council for his contumacy, having been bound (in spite of his great estates) in the sum of £500 to appear. Here, for the first and last time, he stood face to face with Buckingham. Asked why he refused to pay, he replied quietly : " I could be content to lend as well as others, but I fear to draw upon myself that curse in Magna Carta which is to be read twice a year against those who infringe it." Such an answer, with its polite implication of Royal illegality, was not calculated to mollify his hearers, and, as he had half-expected, he was committed to prison to give him time to reconsider his decision.

The gaol chosen was the unhealthy Gate House,

standing in the shadow of Westminster Abbey, in which his cousin, Sir Edmund Hampden, was already imprisoned for the same cause, and where he was soon joined by Sir John Eliot. (Sir Thomas Wentworth, whose opposition was not less spirited than Hampden's, was in the Marshalsea.) Hampden, to whom strenuous exercise and the fresh air of the countryside had become, by long habit, necessities of life, found his health breaking down under the strain of close confinement. Eliot watched his condition with anxiety, and was relieved when, though still adamant in his refusal, he was transferred to a less rigorous imprisonment in Hampshire. But Hampden never recovered completely from the effect of those months, and, as a result of them, suffered, for the rest of his life, from poor blood. "He never after," one noted, "did look like the same man he was before."

For Eliot there was no mitigation, in spite of his petition to the King saying that "he could not become an actor in this loan, which by imprisonment and restraint was urged, contrary to the grants of the Great Charter by so many glorious and victorious kings so many times confirmed . . . but no factious humour nor disaffection led on by stubbornness and will hath herein stirred or moved him, but the just obligation of his conscience, which binds him to the service of your Majesty in the



observance of your laws." And Sir Edmund Hampden, who, with four other knights, had the hardihood to challenge the legality of the imprisonment, was kept in the Gate House, in spite of the physicians' warning of the precarious state of his health, till he died from it.

In the country, resistance to the loan continued. The aristocracy and the middle-class landowners might lead the movement, but it was the unnamed poor who followed it and fought, in their own fashion, for the defence of law. Charles, who still required men for the war, ordered that citizens of no great standing who refused to pay their portion should be conscripted and sent to the King of Denmark for his use on the Continent. Some went. Others carried resistance one step further by refusing to take the press-money. Members of the Privy Council recommended that they should be hanged.

The best means of impressing the country at large with the justice of the royal policy was through the pulpit. One of the Laudian clergy had, rather by accident than by design, preached a sermon which appealed to Charles. He had stated that, even should the King demand from his subjects things impossible or contrary to the laws of nature, they were not to resist him although they could not actively comply. The Archbishop of Canterbury

was ordered to licence the printing of this pronouncement for general circulation. When he refused, he was imprisoned and deprived of his jurisdiction, and the Church courts were placed in the hands of a commission under the control of Laud, now Bishop of Bath and Wells. Another sermon soon followed, this time by the Arminian Dr. Manwaring, who explained that refusal to pay the Forced Loan undoubtedly entailed eternal damnation.

Of Laud's own theological compilations, the most widely known dealt with less debatable matters. At the King's request he had composed a special prayer to be recited in all the churches :

No victory can wait on the justest designs, upon the wisest counsels, upon the strongest armies, if Thou teach not their hands to war and their fingers to fight. . . . Be with our armies and the armies of our allies and associates by land ; be with our navy at sea. Be not from the one nor from the other, in power and in great mercy, until Thou hast brought them back with honour and a settled peace.

The reference was to Buckingham's expedition against France (with whom England was now at war), in which, by a combination of bad generalship and worse management, he contrived to lose 4,000 out of his 7,000 men. The charming courtesy with which he had conducted the affair, sending a

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present of a dozen melons to the French commander, and receiving from him, as a token of reciprocal esteem, several bottles of citron-flower water, did not unfortunately counter-balance the impression made on his countrymen at home by the more practical side of his leadership.

Nor did the conduct of the survivors of this Rhé campaign, who were in a worse state than those from Cadiz, reconcile the people to a war which was already detested in principle. The sailors, who had not been paid for ten months, threatened to mutiny, and started to steal the soldiers' arms, which they sold for small sums in order to postpone starvation. (Eliot's successor was mysteriously unable to account for the money he had received in order to pay them.) The soldiers, billeted without payment on the peasantry, broke up the furniture, threw the food in the fire when it displeased them, raided the surrounding countryside and ravished the women. The enforcement of martial law was turned from its use against soldiers who had disturbed civilians to employment against civilians who endeavoured to protect their property against the soldiers.

But the war must at all costs go on. Charles's dignity was at stake as well as Buckingham's vanity, which had been wounded by the failure of his efforts to seduce the French Queen before the outbreak of hostilities. Yet to continue the war

without the money which Parliament alone could grant was becoming every day manifestly more impossible. Even the Privy Council saw the necessity for the reassembly of the Houses.

Charles bowed to their advice, but, before he issued the writs for the elections, he took two important steps. As a measure of precaution, he sent over to Germany for a thousand trained cavalry, who might prove useful in the case of opposition from Parliament or Bench. And, as a measure of conciliation, he set free seventy-six persons who had been imprisoned for refusing the loan, including Sir John Eliot, Sir Thomas Wentworth and John Hampden.

Thus, in little more than a year after he had ridden away from his manor to face the Privy Council, John returned to offer himself as a candidate for the new Parliament. But, in more than appearance, he was a very different man from the youth who, seven years ago, had gone diffidently to Westminster to learn the ways of government. He had not imagined then that prison would be part of them. He was not of those who court punishment – not driven desperate by poverty, or by oppression rendered bitter and self-assertive, or goaded into reckless activity by an empty life, or seeking in wild paths forgetfulness of unsatisfied desire – but a man of wealth and position, married to a wife whom he

adored, blessed with children, and finding perfect loyalty and companionship in his boyhood's friend. With everything to lose and nothing to gain, he had deliberately imperilled his peace.

He himself had explained his action, publicly enough, as obedience to the laws of England. But it was hardly as simple as that. The loan had brought in £236,000, and he was not immodest enough to suppose that many who had contributed were less honest or less law-abiding than himself: Pym, for one, had paid. His legal training may have made him over-pedantic, though one does not go to prison in London in the summer for the sake of a technical quibble. Doubtless the motives were mixed. To find himself carried so far out of the course he would have chosen argued contradictory currents. His critics, then and later, spoke of faction and covetousness and ambition.

Perhaps the truth of it, half-hidden from himself, lay not in principles but in a person. Where John Eliot led, John Hampden must follow, unable to guess the end, but knowing certainly that there was for him no retreat once battle was joined.

## THE COMMONS OF ENGLAND SPEAK

THE election result was a foregone conclusion. There was no mistaking the temper of the voters. Candidates who had resisted the Forced Loan were certain of success, and everywhere the Court party lost seat after seat. On March 13th, 1628, four days before the opening of Parliament, Hampden was summoned to an informal meeting in a London house where, among others, Eliot, Coke, Pym, Wentworth and his brother-in-law, Denzil Holles, Lord Clare's stormy son, were present to discuss a plan of action. Eliot, in deference to the general feeling, withdrew his original suggestion that the attack on Buckingham should be resumed. There were matters of greater urgency now that the King's counter-attack on personal liberty had put the very existence of the commonwealth at stake. The rights of his subjects must be vindicated before the errors of his Majesty were reaffirmed.

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precedents. This time he had found a noble one, "worthy to be written in letters of gold" – the twenty-sixth of Edward III, stating that loans against the will of the subject were contrary to the franchises of the land. There was no circumventing that. But Wentworth was less concerned with precedents. He was aware that, given sufficient skill and research, precedents could be produced to prove almost anything on either side. With his passion for simplifying an issue, he wished to define by a new law the boundaries of the King's prerogative, so that, in any subsequent dispute, appeal could be made to a statute unequivocally framed to meet the needs of a contemporary situation. Otherwise he was at a loss to see how government was to be carried on. Both parties would continue to waste the time that should be spent in useful action in disputing with one another as to whether or not the action was permissible.

Neither Coke, despite his fanatical hatred of Catholics, nor Wentworth, despite his dislike of law-breaking recusants, shared Pym's interest in the religious issue. They could not understand how, both to him and to Hampden, the Arminian identification of paying illegal taxes with moral duty to God had come with all the shock of an unpalatable blasphemy. It was the inevitable lack of sympathy between men who saw religion merely as a pillar of

the State and those who believed it a matter of individual importance, supreme over all other matters. What Coke resented as a breach of law and Wentworth as an obstacle to government, Pym was learning to loathe as an attack on conscience.

The actual need of the moment was, however, seen to be best served by the practical policy of Wentworth, and to him the leadership of the coming session was entrusted. Eliot promised his loyal co-operation but reserved the right to revert to his own policy should circumstances demand it. As he said, good laws had no life under a bad administration and the protection of the subject from evil government was of necessity imperfect until the King was himself protected from evil counsellors.

On March 17th, Laud, slightly lame from a strained sinew, mounted the pulpit with difficulty to preach his opening-of-Parliament sermon to the assembled members in St. Margaret's. Taking for his text: "Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace," he elaborated his former position and, with a sidelong glance at the little group round Eliot, reminded his hearers: "To keep unity it is necessary that the governors have a good and quick eye to discover the cunning of them that would break the unity first and the whole body after. You shall give a guess at them by this - they will speak as much for unity as any



man ; they will pretend perhaps it is very good there should be a *vinculum*, a band to bind men to obedience (O God forbid else !), but they would not have the knot too hard. Take heed. Their aim is that they would have a little more liberty that have too much already.”

The Bishop’s sermon was followed by the King’s speech. Charles graciously announced that he was willing to forgive and forget recent events if the Commons would observe the counsel just given them by endeavouring to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. Meanwhile his object in calling them together was that they might vote him money. If they failed in this he should feel bound to use those “ other measures which God has put into my hands to save that which the follies of some particular men may otherwise hazard to lose. Take not this as a threatening, for I scorn to threaten any but my equals, but an admonition.”

It was hardly surprising that the attitude implicit in these two pronouncements should rouse Eliot. He decided that, before the drafting of a practical Bill to redress particular grievances, the great principles at stake must be clearly stated, lest the apologists for the Court policy should succeed in representing the Forced Loan as nothing more than an unimportant and isolated demand for necessary money from subjects who could well afford to lend it.

In one of the greatest speeches ever delivered in an English Parliament, Eliot defined the issue once and for all :

“Perchance it will be said, this proves not the calamity so large, so indefinite, that it should reach to all. This is a particular only of money. It is a violation of some particular laws, and only at some particular times attempted : but not of more : so that the consequence in this cannot be so dangerous, so fearful as is pretended. Yes, I must answer, *it is of more* ; more than is pretended, more than can be uttered. Upon this dispute not alone our lands and goods are engaged, but all that we call ours. Those rights, those privileges, which made our fathers free men, are in question. If they be not now the more carefully preserved, they will, I fear, render us to posterity less free, less worthy than our fathers. For this particular admits a power to antiquate the laws. It gives leave to the State, besides the parliament, to annihilate or decline any Act of Parliament ; and that which is done in one thing or at one time, may be done in more and oftener.”

But it was not a matter of legality alone ; the religious question was inextricably bound up with it. When the attack on liberty had been reinforced from the pulpits of the land and Laud's policy had ensured that “the truly pious and religious had

been discountenanced, their preferments hindered, their employments stopped, their ministers opposed, and, by new edicts and inquisitions, questioned and disturbed," it was time for an enquiry. There was, indeed, "a conjunction of dangers." The two questions could no longer be considered singly. "They no longer consist in terms so divided or separate that in the prejudice and danger of religion we may retain the safety and security of our liberties, or in the danger and prejudice of our liberties hope for a safety and security in religion. By conjunction and mutual necessities between them, they are now so much augmented that there cannot be a security in either without the conservation of them both. . . . So, sir, as I said, let us clearly understand the danger we are in and that it proceeds from the habit of disregarding and violating laws ; that it is laws which regulate liberty, and the safety of our liberties which secures religion. The reason is apparent in their very force and letter. Apply to religion what has been propounded as to monies exacted for the loan. We possess laws providing first in general against all forms of innovation, and also careful in particular to prevent the practice of our enemies. . . .

"And therefore I shall conclude with this further desire. In respect of the great importance of the work, there being such dangers apparent as to our liberties and religion . . . I shall desire, I say, that

on those two principles we may pitch : that they may be the subject of our treaties . . . and that by a firm and settled order of the House, nothing may retard or interrupt us . . . till they are well and finally established."

Meanwhile the ordinary business of the House must continue. Hampden found that his part in the matter of the loan had given him, in the opinion of the Commons, a new status which was tacitly confirmed by his appointment to committee after committee. On March 21st, four days after the opening, he served with Coke and Digges on a committee on "an act to restrain the sending away of persons to be popishly bred beyond the seas" and, a week later, with Wentworth, on one "to examine the warrants for billeting soldiers or levying money in the county of Surrey," where the Constable with a band of a hundred soldiers had been terrorising the countryside and extorting money by threatening to burn the houses of the inhabitants. On April 3rd he was considering, with Eliot, a bill "to regulate the pressing of men as ambassadors, or on other foreign service, so as to promote the good of the people as well as the service of the state"; and, on the 7th, one for "the better continuance of peace and unity in the church and commonwealth." On the 23rd he was, with Pym, engaged "concerning subscription or

against procuring judicial appointments for money or other rewards," and, in the same month, was occupied on practical details for "establishing and confirming the foundation of the hospital of King James, founded in Charterhouse," in discussion of measures "against scandalous and unworthy ministers" and "on the presentments of recusants made by the knights of the several shires."

Other committees on which he served, and which exercised his industry in discovering precedents, were those "on the case of the Turkey merchants," whose goods had been detained because they had not paid tonnage and poundage; "for explaining a branch of the statute 3rd of James," which dealt with the appropriation of vicarages; "to consider the two commissions for compounding with recusants"; "on the petitions of Burgess and Sparke," whom the Bishop of Durham had persecuted; and one simply "to search for records and precedents." By the time he had finished with these, filling notebooks with references to past judgments which had a bearing on present problems, his knowledge of constitutional law and practice had become remarkable even in an assembly containing so many lawyers. In addition there were committees "to take the certificates of the Trinity House merchants for the loss of ships" and "for redressing the neglect of preaching and catechising."

Most of the secular matters were manifestations, in one form or another, of the three great grievances occupying the minds of all – arbitrary taxation, imprisonment without just cause on the King's word alone, and the billeting of soldiers without payment – which were debated point by point in the Commons and discussed with the Lords during the six weeks of Wentworth's unchallenged leadership. He pursued his plan for framing a Bill which would define the liberties of the subject in a law binding for all ordinary occasions, but capable, if public safety demanded it, of being overridden by the King as executive. It was wrecked by Charles.

The King could not understand that Wentworth's endeavours, far from representing an extremist attitude, were the last limit of compromise. Already the Commons had voted him five subsidies – a grant far larger than any that had been made to an English sovereign – and they had deliberately abstained from suggesting how it might be spent, so that he could consider it his absolutely, to use as he thought best. In the Bill itself all mention of grievances was intentionally omitted. "We desired," said Coke, "our pen might be in oil, not in vinegar." Charles's reply was to dismiss the matter altogether with the assurance that they "would find as much sincerity in his Royal word and promise as in the strength of any law they could

make," and to instruct the Speaker to put to the House the question "whether they would rest on his Royal word and promise."

"We have His Majesty's coronation oath to maintain the laws of England," answered Pym. "What need we then to take his word?"

"We are ambitious," said Wentworth, "that His Majesty's goodness may remain to posterity, and we are accountable for a public trust; and therefore, seeing that there hath been a public violation of the laws, nothing can satisfy them but a public amends."

Charles sent back a message repeating his promise, but emphasising that he would not hear of any encroachment of the prerogative which God had put into his hands.

Wentworth made his last effort. A remonstrance was prepared, assuring the King that the Commons had no wish to encroach on his prerogative, that they had every trust in his goodness and that their desire to vindicate the subject's rights by Bill was no more than was laid down by former laws. Charles replied that he had given his royal word and that that was enough. There was, indeed, no more to be said. The Commons could not presume to doubt the royal word without insulting the King, and if the King would not sanction the Bill the matter was at an end. Wentworth's plan had failed

and his leadership was over. It was Coke's turn now.

The greatest lawyer of the age, nearing eighty but with intellect undimmed and learning unforgotten, rose to direct the House for the last time. He instructed them how best to proceed: "The King's answer is very gracious. But what is the law of the realm? that is the question. I put no diffidence in his Majesty. The King must speak by a record and in particulars, and not in general. Let us have a conference with the Lords, and join in a Petition of Right to the King for our particular grievances. Not that I distrust the King, but because we cannot take his trust but in a Parliamentary way."

This Petition of Right adopted the three main points of Wentworth's Bill and added a fourth—a declaration that martial law was illegal. For three weeks it was discussed with the Lords, who, inspired by Buckingham, endeavoured to modify its clauses and destroy its effectiveness. Again it seemed that the plan would be wrecked. "We are now fallen," said Wentworth, "from a new statute and a new law to a Petition of Right, and unless the Lords co-operate with us the stamp is out of that which gives a value to the action."

"As though," retorted Eliot, "the virtue and perfection of this House depended upon and were included in their Lordships! Sir, I cannot make so



slight an estimation of the Commons as to make them mere cyphers to nobility. No ! I am confident that, should the Lords desert us, we should yet continue flourishing and green." The Commons were with him and three days later, swayed by the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Lords were with the Commons. On May 28th, 1628, the Petition of Right passed both Houses.

Charles, faced with a situation more unpleasant than before, finding in the Petition all that had been in the Bill with the additional annoyance that, if he consented to it, he would be publicly acknowledging that his recent acts had been illegal, called both Houses together on June 2nd and announced : " Gentlemen, I am come here to perform my duty. I think no man can think it long, since I have not taken so many days in answering the Petition as ye spent weeks in framing it." Then, without making any further reference to it, he gave his usual promise to observe the laws of the land. It was an answer which meant nothing whatever. After ten weeks of work, conflict and compromise, the Commons had progressed not a step nearer their goal.

Coke had failed as Wentworth had failed and now, at last, it was Eliot's hour. For those ten weeks he had kept silent about Buckingham ; he had subordinated himself to Wentworth, whom he disliked and distrusted ; he had done his utmost to

## JOHN HAMPDEN

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the Exchequer empty and the Crown Jewels pawned – “ what perfect English heart is not almost dissolved into sorrow for the truth ? For the oppression of the subject, it needs no demonstration. The whole kingdom is a proof. And for` the exhausting of our treasure, that oppression speaks it.

“ What waste of our provisions, what consumption of our ships, what destruction of our men, have been, – witness the journey to Algiers ! Witness that with Mansfeld ! Witness that to Cadiz ! Witness the next ! Witness that to Rhé ! Witness the last ! (And I pray God we may never have more such witnesses.) Witness likewise the Palatinate ! Witness Denmark ! Witness the Turks ! Witness the Dunkirkers ! Witness all ! What losses we have sustained ; how we are impaired in munition, in ships, in men ! It has no contradiction ! We were never so much weakened, nor had less hope how to be restored.

“ These things, Sir, I shall desire to have taken into consideration. That as we are the Great Council of the Kingdom, and have the apprehension of these dangers, we may truly represent them to the King ; wherein I conceive we are bound by a treble obligation of duty unto God, of duty to His Majesty, and of duty to our country.

“ And therefore I wish it may so stand with the wisdom and judgment of the House, that they may

be drawn into the body of a Remonstrance, and there with all humility expressed ; with a prayer unto His Majesty that, for the safety of himself, for the safety of the Kingdom, for the safety of religion, he will be pleased to give us time to make a perfect inquisition."

Charles was not likely to allow such an inquisition, the inevitable result of which he knew too well. He sent to tell them that the session would be brought to an end in a week and that they must devote their remaining time in passing the Subsidy Bill. The House, ignoring the message, went into Committee on the Remonstrance.

Next morning, June 5th, the King sent again, this time explicitly forbidding them to proceed with any business which might " lay any scandal or aspersion upon the State, Government or ministers thereof." The parting of the ways had come.

There ensued a scene such as the ancient Chapel of St. Stephen had never witnessed. The walls resounded, not with angry shouts (which had become common enough), but with sobs. Tears streamed down Coke's lined face ; Pym was mastered by emotion and Hampden needed all his iron self-control to hold himself in check. His young cousin, Oliver Cromwell—in Parliament for the first time—was crying unashamedly. He was, beneath his uncouth exterior, a religious mystic,

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over-sensitive to an atmosphere charged with supernatural fear. For on that "black and doleful Thursday" men saw the choice before them.

None doubted that the King was God's lieutenant. Never for one moment had they ascribed to him personally the responsibility for misgovernment. From the day when they sent the Protestation to James till the day when they sent the Petition to Charles they were inspired by one belief—that George Villiers, a subject like themselves, stood between them and the Throne, intercepting the advice which it was their duty to offer the King in order that both his Crown and his people's liberties should be secure. If only the King were allowed to see the results of his Ministers' policy as they saw them, all would be well. But now Charles had revealed the truth. He had told them, as plainly as if he had spoken the very words: "Not Buckingham, but the King." With all the authority of that mystical and divine right which, in England, was his uniquely and alone—a power far transcending any legal definitions of the boundary of the prerogative—he had sanctioned every error and, by his intervention, had made it sacrilege to deny them. The Commons were afraid.

In comparison with this the curious doctrines propounded in Arminian pulpits sank into insignificance. Those could be explained as local lapses

from orthodoxy and punished as such, but this was capable of no such convenient interpretation. If they continued in their course now, they were no longer fighting flesh and blood but the divinity that hedged a King. And from that moment many withdrew from the conflict.

But the Puritans went on. They alone, indeed, had the strength for it, for their individual certainty of God made them see the issue in terms which admitted of no compromise. Just as they had refused to imagine that they would be eternally damned for refusing to subscribe to the loan, so now they doubted if incompetent government and illegal taxation were the authentic manifestations of the Divine Will. The Calvinistic equality of all men before God was, finally, incompatible with the claims of special divinity resident in the person of Charles Stuart. But to see it in these terms was no easy choice. Against them was the weight of the prejudice and tradition of centuries, as well as the conservative instinct of the mass of their fellow-countrymen. They had, too, to wrestle with much in their own natures, though this perhaps was not over-difficult for men who, in the dark night of the soul, had wrestled with God for their own salvation. Thus the choice, as they envisaged it, was not between obedience and disobedience to God in the person of the King, but between justice and

injustice, between tyranny and liberty. The Royalist in later years would learn to cry : " For God and the King," but for the Puritan it became all too soon, " God or the King."

In the few moments of awed silence which fell on the House of Commons after the King's message was delivered, these things were sensed intuitively rather than logically apprehended. The great divisions were not yet. Men could still walk side by side on the same road who were bound in opposite directions. Pym and Wentworth still sat together, inseparable in friendship. If, in that stillness, the Commons had glimpsed the conclusion of the matter, in their speech they put it behind them and addressed themselves to the practical need of the moment. Eliot, believing that Charles's message was not his own, but Buckingham's, suggested that there must have been some misrepresentation to the King. " I am confident no minister, how dear soever, can——"

The Speaker, tears in his eyes, did not allow him to finish the sentence : " There is a command laid upon me to interrupt any that should go about to lay an aspersion on the ministers of state."

Eliot sat down. If freedom of speech were denied, best be silent. The House went into Committee, thus releasing the Speaker from a duty as unpleasant to him as it was intolerable to them. Then

Coke, himself once more, quoted with unfaltering voice precedent after precedent to show that the Commons had a right to discuss the acts of a King's Minister. Daring what Eliot shrank from, he named the Duke: "I think the Duke of Buckingham is the cause of all our miseries, and till the King be informed thereof, we shall never go out with honour or sit with honour here. That man is the grievance of grievances."

At last the word was spoken and the House breathed a sigh of relief. Eliot had been right. Good laws were of no effect in the hands of evil counsellors. By the deliberate omission in this Parliament of all reference to the burning topic of the last, the impeachment of Buckingham, an air of unreality had hung over the proceedings. And now "as when one good hound recovers the scent the rest come in with a full cry, so they pursued it." They added to the Remonstrance a final clause condemning the Duke. As it was being put to the vote the King sent the Speaker back to them to order them to adjourn till next day. It was only eleven in the morning and they had no doubt that, on the morrow they would be dissolved.

It was the Lords who saved them. They, in no mind for a dissolution, dispatched Buckingham at the head of a deputation to ask Charles for a clear and satisfactory answer to the Petition of Right,



## THE COMMONS OF ENGLAND SPEAK

and in the afternoon of June 7th the Commons were called into the Upper House to hear, not, as they feared, the dissolution, but the official formula “*Soit droit fait comme est désiré*,” which made the Petition the law of the land. The shouts of applause spread from the House to the City and from the City to the country. Bells pealed and bonfires blazed. Such rejoicing had not been seen since the day when Charles and Buckingham returned from Spain. But if Charles was once more the idol of his people, his friend did not this time share in the adulation. That night in the streets it was rumoured – the wish fathering the thought – that the Duke had been sent to the Tower.

The Petition of Right was passed. It stood now, with Magna Carta, as an ultimate authority to which appeal could be made. It declared illegal the exaction of “any gift, loan, benevolence, tax or such like charge, without common consent by Act of Parliament,” all billeting of soldiers on private citizens, all exercise of martial law, and all imprisonment without cause shown. Eliot and Wentworth and Hampden were vindicated and none in future would be called on to pay the price that they had paid for the upholding of the law. But the King’s words on granting the Petition might have warned them that his interpretation of his oath might not coincide in all particulars with their

conception of its meaning. His official consent was, he had said, "no more than I granted you on my first answer."

Nevertheless, when the words of ratification were pronounced, Wentworth's work was done and Coke had closed his career by initiating a statute which was to go down to posterity second only in importance to the Great Charter he had so revered and so upheld. But Eliot continued to press forward with the Remonstrance, and Pym, now that the constitutional question was settled, was free to undertake the affairs of religion.

The Petition of Right was passed on Saturday, June 7th. On Monday, June 9th, Pym appeared before the House of Lords to impeach Dr. Manwaring. During the proceedings it was discovered that the offending sermon had been licensed for printing by the special order of the King and actually against the advice of Laud. As in matters of the State, so now in matters of the Church, it seemed that Charles had more direct responsibility for affairs than the Commons cared to contemplate. But, whoever was to blame for the dissemination of the obnoxious opinions, there was no doubt that the man who invented them must be punished. Manwaring was condemned to imprisonment during the pleasure of the House, fined £1000, prohibited from holding any ecclesiastical or civil office and

suspended from preaching at Court for life and anywhere else, for three years.

In the Remonstrance itself there was also a complaint of the favour shown to the Arminians – a matter which the King professed himself the more willing to remedy since Laud disclaimed the description on the ground that the technical dispute between Predestination and Free Will was beyond his power of deciding.

But on the matter of Buckingham Charles stood firm. A Remonstrance which desired “that your excellent Majesty will be pleased to take into your princely consideration whether, in respect the said Duke hath so abused his power, it be safe for your Majesty and your kingdom to continue him either in his great offices, or in his place of nearness and counsel about your sacred person,” could meet with only one answer. It was rejected. Then, a few days later, hearing that another Remonstrance was being prepared, this time on the subject of tonnage and poundage, Charles angrily prorogued Parliament.

A fortnight later he replied to Pym by appointing Laud Bishop of London and pardoning Manwaring, whom he promoted to a Crown rectory.

Pym, however, had a harder blow to bear. In the early days of July Wentworth had sent a message asking him to come alone to Greenwich. There

he had found his friend in a strange mood, waiting to discuss the events and implications of the past session. Did not Pym think that they had accomplished all that they usefully could in opposition? Their task, after all, was not to obstruct but to govern. Now that the King's arbitrary will had been limited, government could best be achieved by co-operation with him. Wentworth considered it almost certain that the Court would make overtures to them. Surely, in the event of it——

Pym cut him short: "You need not use all this art to tell me you have a mind to leave us. But remember what I tell you — that though you leave us now, I will never leave you while your head is upon your shoulders." With that outburst of anger to conceal his amazed sorrow, Pym left Wentworth never to meet him again but as an irreconcilable enemy. Before the month was out Wentworth was admitted to the King's favour, created a peer and promised the Presidency of the Council of the North.

The country at large, though the news-letters discussed the new creations, was more interested in the old favourite. A crowd of Londoners had assaulted Buckingham's private astrologer with such violence that he had died from it, and they freely admitted that, if they could lay hands on the Duke himself, he would fare worse. So great was the feeling against him that one of his friends begged

him to wear a mail shirt, but he refused : “ A shirt of mail would be but a silly defence against any popular fury. As for a single man’s assault, I take myself to be in no danger. There are no Roman spirits left.”

He was wrong. John Felton, a gentleman of Suffolk, who had served under him in the Rhé campaign, had, on applying for promotion, been told to go and hang himself. On his return to London, as his pay was not forthcoming, the extent of his debts left him with little prospect of dispensing with the Duke’s advice. When he discovered, from reading the Commons’ rejected Remonstrance, that the author of his private misfortunes was also a public enemy, he determined that wrongs should be righted in a more practical way than had occurred to Parliament. He bought a dagger for tenpence on Tower Hill ; prayed long and earnestly in a church in Fleet Street ; sewed inside his hat a paper bearing the message : “ If I be slain let no man condemn me, but rather condemn himself. It is for our sins that our hearts are hardened and become senseless, or else he had not gone so long unpunished ” ; and set out to walk to Portsmouth, where Buckingham was endeavouring to cope with a naval mutiny.

He stabbed him to death just after breakfast on the 23rd of August.

was of importance to them. Rolles himself, who owed not more than £200, had £5000 worth of merchandise reposing in the King's storehouse. The customs officers had, moreover, added insult to injury by informing him, when he reminded them that a member of Parliament had certain privileges, that if he were Parliament itself it would make no difference to their action. Eventually the Exchequer Court decided that all goods should remain in the King's possession till the matter had been referred to Parliament.

Constitutionally, this was excellent. As a practical measure, it so infuriated the merchants, whose trade had been sufficiently affected by the prevalence of piracy without the additional drawback of official confiscation, that, early in January, some of them attempted to recover their goods by force. There were more imprisonments.

In spite of the feeling in the City, Charles was satisfied that the question could be settled amicably with the Commons. He had been scrupulous to avoid any show of illegality ; the Petition of Right was on the statute book ; and Buckingham, the object of all their attacks, was dead. No one had taken his place either at Court or in Charles's heart. Only the Lord Treasurer, Weston, advised the King with counsels of moderation, and, although he was originally one of Buckingham's

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appointments, he was in every way a contrast to his patron.

Buckingham, with no asset but his personality, had conquered the Court and made a fortune ; Weston spent a fortune buying himself into Court, and, once there, in spite of conventional speculation, accumulated nothing but debts. Buckingham, however he may have provoked men's antagonism, cared very little what they thought of him, and never shrank from defending himself ; Weston, having, by his unfortunate manner, exacerbated men's tempers to breaking-point, thereupon became abjectly afraid of them, and, with his feminine genius for gossip, canvassed the Court to discover their opinion of him. Buckingham's troubles were largely due to the abundant vitality which made inaction of some sort imperative ; Weston, who did not know the meaning of enthusiasm, considered inaction in itself a panacea. Seven years after Buckingham's murder, Weston died peacefully, "unlamented by any, bitterly mentioned by most and severely censured and complained by those who deserved best of him."

In spite of the new policy of masterly inactivity which Weston eventually persuaded the King to adopt, there was still one potential source of strife - religion. Even if the Commons were amiable over tonnage and poundage, it was improbable that

they would refrain from reopening the theological controversy. Consequently, just before the meeting of Parliament, Charles published a Declaration in which, as supreme governor of the Church, he announced his intention "not to suffer unnecessary disputations, altercations or questions to be raised which may nourish faction both in Church and commonwealth." The Thirty-Nine Articles of Religion, which contained the uniform faith of the English Church, were to be accepted in their "literal and grammatical sense," while any differences of opinion "about the external Injunctions, Canons and other Constitutions whatsoever thereto belonging, the clergy in their Convocation is to order and settle." This, in effect, debarred the Commons from discussing religious topics, and transferred all ecclesiastical authority into the hands of Laud and his friends who dominated Convocation.

When the Commons at last reassembled, the King was so sure that all tension was at an end that he did not even think it necessary to address them. But after they had complained that the Petition of Right had been violated, had protested that copies of it had been circulated in the country omitting the royal words of sanction, had set up a committee for religion under the chairmanship of Pym and had started enquiries about the merchants' goods, he changed his mind. He called them to Whitehall



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and explained that he was quite aware that his levy of tonnage and poundage was not legal without their sanction. He had collected it only because circumstances made it necessary, and he was relying on them, according to their intention, to pass the Bill making its legality retrospective. There had been certain speeches which had surprised him, but, he added, "the House's resolution, not particular men's speeches, shall make me judge well or ill, not doubting but, according to mine example, you will be deaf to all reports concerning me, until my words and actions speak for themselves, that this session, beginning with confidence one towards the other, it may end with a perfect good understanding between us : which God grant."

From the King's point of view, the business of the session was merely to pass the Tonnage and Poundage Bill as quickly as possible. But this measure was now inevitably bound up with the case of the merchants and would require time for careful investigation. Hampden found himself appointed to the committee "to search the course and precedents in the Exchequer concerning the injunction against merchants' goods detained for the non-payment of duties." He was also on that "to examine the matter and information in the Star Chamber," and that "concerning the differences in the several impressions of the Thirty-Nine

Articles." He realised that if the "merchants' committee" involved most work and was of the more immediate practical importance, it was the other two which focused the larger issues.

The case of Chambers was being tried in the Star Chamber – and the Star Chamber was merely the Privy Council with the addition of the two chief justices. The interpretation of the Thirty-Nine Articles was referred to Convocation – and Convocation was composed of clerics appointed by, and personally dependent on, the King. Thus, by both channels, Charles could exercise his will independently of Parliamentary approval. By the removal of constitutional disputes to the Star Chamber and religious disputes to the Church courts, the House of Commons could be completely circumvented. The irreconcilable division was again evident. To Eliot and Pym and Hampden, final authority resided in the Crown acting with Parliament; from them all other courts derived their power. To the King and Laud, final authority resided in the Crown alone and Parliament was merely one organisation, differing perhaps in degree but not in kind from the Star Chamber, the High Commission and the Judiciary, through which the Royal prerogative might be put into effect.

It was the religious grievance, centring round the King's Declaration and the pardons to the Laudian

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clergy, which occupied the Commons for the first fortnight of the session. They decided, after much discussion, that Parliament, not Convocation, was responsible for the interpretation of disputed points, and they determined to investigate the whole matter of the King's graciousness to Manwaring and his colleagues. Then only, when a pause in these proceedings was made necessary by the summoning of various witnesses, did they return to the matter of tonnage and poundage.

February 12th was appointed as the day for the discussion. On February 10th, John Rolles was subpœnaed to attend the Star Chamber proceedings against the merchants who had attempted to carry off their goods by force. So flagrant an infringement of privilege as summoning a member of Parliament during the session aroused tempers which were not entirely soothed by the Attorney-General's frank admission that it was a mistake. It was the more unfortunate, too, in that it concentrated the House's attention on the matter of privilege, with which it was too much obsessed already. The real question was the distraint of merchandise because of its owner's refusal to pay duties which the King himself had admitted were illegal. The ground on which a majority in the House preferred to consider it was the privileged immunity from seizure of the goods of one of their numbers.

Underlying this refusal to face the true facts was, perhaps unconsciously, the desire to avoid at all costs a conflict with the King – a desire which, since the “black and doleful Thursday,” had, for many, dominated every other consideration. It was this feeling which led to a momentary disagreement between Eliot and Pym.

Eliot decided – and the House agreed with him – to attack the customs officers for having exceeded their rights. These men had paid the Exchequer a fixed sum, for which they were allowed to recoup themselves by collecting the duties. Thus, technically, it was possible to argue that it was not the King but the farmers of the customs who had seized the goods, and it was not to the King but to the “customers” that the money would go. In this way, Eliot suggested, the question could be considered as one of a breach of privilege – the illegal seizure by private individuals of the goods of John Rolles, a member of Parliament.

Pym dissented from so narrow a view. He had already made his choice and was prepared, if necessary, to carry the struggle to the bitter end, even against the Crown itself. “The liberties of this House,” he proclaimed, “are inferior to the liberties of this kingdom. To determine the privilege of this House is but a mean matter, and the main end is to establish possession of the subjects.”

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“Place your liberty in what sphere you will,” answered Eliot, “if it be not to preserve the privileges of this House. For if we were not here to debate and right ourselves and the kingdom in their liberties, where had all our liberty been at this day? The heart-blood of the Commonwealth receiveth life from the privilege of this House.”

Hampden was in a difficult position. By personal affection tied to Eliot, but drawn to Pym as a political leader ; understanding Eliot’s vision of Parliament as bulwark of the country’s liberty, yet acknowledging Pym’s interpretation that it was for the country’s merchants as a whole and not for one merchant who happened to be a member of Parliament that action should be taken now ; sharing Eliot’s reverence for the King, yet as resolute as Pym to carry resistance to whatever end circumstances might demand, he was uncertain what course to take. He wished to strengthen Pym without offending Eliot, but, above all, to unite them lest even so slight a disagreement should have unfortunate results at a time when unity was so imperative.

Oratory and argument were alike impracticable. The two views had already been expressed by the leaders in such a way that intervention on his part would be both impertinent and inefficacious. So it came about that the first speech which John

Hampden delivered in the House of Commons lasted less than thirty seconds and was confined to a simple proposal. On the morning of Friday, February 20th, he moved, "That Sir John Wolstenholme, the Customer, might also be called in, being in the same case with Dawes and Carmarthen, so that they might proceed with all alike."

Of the three customs officers concerned in the case, only Abraham Dawes and Richard Carmarthen had so far been examined. As they were subsidiaries, it had been the easier for the Commons to dissociate their action from the King's responsibility for it. But Sir John Wolstenholme was the actual patentee. He had paid £150,000 to the Exchequer on the understanding that the King would make up to him any loss should the collected duties fall short of that sum. To examine him was to touch the King more nearly. Even though the House, under Eliot's direction, insisted on taking the cases of the three men separately and construing it as an examination of three ordinary delinquents at the bar, the fact remained that Wolstenholme admitted that the King had instructed him to say that the goods were taken for tonnage and poundage, and his lease from the King was read to the Commons. Moreover the Royal Warrant, which was also read, made the real facts of the situation only too clear.

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“We declare our will,” proclaimed Charles, “that all the duties be levied and collected as they were in the time of our father and in such manner as we shall appoint. And if any person refuse to pay, then our will is that the Lords of our Council and the Lord Treasurer shall commit to prison such so refusing until they conform themselves. And we give full power to all our officers to receive, levy and collect the same ; and we command our barons and all our officers from time to time to give all assistance to the farmers of the same, as fully as when they were collected by Act of Parliament.”

The House, clutching at a straw, noted that here was no commission to “seize,” but only to “receive, levy and collect,” and decided that Rolles ought to have privilege for his goods against the officers. So matters stood when the Commons rose on the Saturday.

On Sunday afternoon, Charles intervened. He saw, as clearly as did Pym, that Eliot’s attempt to dissociate the Crown from the action was merely a polite evasion. At a meeting of the Council, he declared that “he could not sever the act of the officers from his own act, neither could his officers suffer from it without high dishonour to his Majesty.” This message the secretary was instructed to deliver next day to the Commons.

When the Commons heard it and realised that

now all that they had been fearing had come to pass, that now, with no possibility for misunderstanding or modification, they were opposing the King, they adjourned for two days to give the matter their earnest consideration. But when they met on the Wednesday, still undecided, they were adjourned for another week. There was little doubt in their minds that on that day, March 2nd, they would be re-adjourned and dissolved.

With the memory of the end of last session before them, they determined that, rather than again "be turned off like scattered sheep," they would, at whatever cost, "leave something behind." So the week of respite became one of intense political activity. As before the opening of the Parliament Eliot and his friends had informally discussed their plan of action, so now, as the end was nearing, the unofficial committee met once more. Two of last year's leaders were lost. Coke's parliamentary days were over and Lord Wentworth was with the Court. But his brother-in-law, Denzil Holles, was still there; and Pym, his one-time friend; and Hampden; and Benjamin Valentine, the member for Eliot's town of St. Germans; and, above all, Eliot himself, leading them.

He decided to insist on the Commons' right to adjourn themselves. Instead of doing this immediately on receipt of the King's message, as was the



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ustom, they would transact one piece of business first. They would put on record a protest by which the whole country might judge them. And, as time would of necessity be short, Eliot alone would speak.

Meanwhile their opponents were not idle. The Court canvassed all the waverers, among them Sir Dudley Digges, who, not three years ago, had suffered imprisonment with Eliot. He secretly made his peace with the King and accepted the reversion of the Mastership of the Rolls. But though he could no longer stand with Eliot, he could not forbear to warn him. Early in the morning of March 2nd, he wrote hastily to him: "Let me pray you to preserve yourself clear, a looker-on; which, credit me – if my weakness be worth your crediting – will both advantage you and much content me."

Eliot knew well what risk he ran; that was an additional reason why he alone should speak. No one, not even Digges, could have seriously imagined that at this juncture he could play the part of "looker-on." Yet no one, not even Eliot, was prepared for the fierceness of the events which were to make the two-hour sitting of March 2nd a landmark in history for generations to come.

As soon as prayers were over, the Speaker, Finch, announced the King's command that the House

should adjourn till March 10th. Immediately there was a great cry of "No ! No !" and Eliot rose to speak, holding in his hand a paper. The Speaker checked him by saying that His Majesty's absolute command was that no speech was to be permitted, and rose from his chair to put an end to the proceedings by leaving the House. But Denzil Holles (who, as a peer's son, had a seat near the Chair) and Benjamin Valentine seized his arms and forced him back into his seat. When some Privy Councillors endeavoured to go to his assistance the way was barred by a crowd of angry members and Holles's voice was heard clearly above the tumult : " God's wounds ! You shall sit till we please to rise."

Then Eliot, from his place on the top bench at the back of the House, threw down the paper containing the protestation for the Speaker or the Clerk to read, so that it might be put to the vote. Both the Speaker and the Clerk refused. Then, by one member after another, the Speaker was reminded that he was the servant of the House. Eliot added that the order of the House would be sufficient to excuse him in the King's eyes.

At this point several of the Court members tried to leave. But no tales must reach the King. One of Eliot's friends locked the door and put the key in his pocket.

Again the Speaker was asked to do the House's

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bidding. "I am not the less the King's servant," he said, "for being yours. I will not say I *will* not put the reading of the paper to the question, but I must say I *dare* not."

Then Eliot began his last speech to the Commons. Once more he drew their attention to the evils in the religious situation, urging resistance to Catholicism and Arminianism ; once more he vindicated the liberty of the subject by protesting against the illegal collection of tonnage and poundage. "There is in this paper," he proclaimed, "a protestation against those persons that are innovators in religion, against those that are the introducers of any new customs, and a protestation against those that shall execute such commands for tonnage and poundage, and a protestation against merchants that, if any merchant shall pay any such duties, he as all the rest shall be as capital enemies of the State, and whensoever we sit here again, if I be here (as I think I shall) I shall proceed against the person of that man."

Now that the resolutions were known, the Speaker was once more asked to put them formally to the House, but he persisted in his refusal. It was then moved that, as by his conduct he had virtually abdicated his position, Eliot should take the Chair and himself move the resolutions.

But Eliot, in despair, had thrown the paper in the fire.

"I think that gentleman hath done very ill to burn that paper," said Holles.

"I give the gentleman great thanks for reproving me," answered Eliot, "and of all the obligations that have passed between us, I hold this for the greatest."

At this moment there was a knocking on the door. The King had sent for the Mace. The House allowed the Sergeant-at-Arms to retire, but would not allow the Mace to be touched. The Commons knew now that it was a matter of minutes.

As soon as the Sergeant had made his report, a message was received that the King had sent for his guard to break down the door and disperse the Commons by force.

Holles leapt forward: "Since that paper is burnt," he shouted, drowning the voices of the Court dissentients, "I conceive I cannot do his Majesty nor my country better service than to deliver to this House what was contained in it, which, as I remember, was thus much in effect:

"Whosoever shall bring in innovation in religion, or by favour seek to extend or introduce Popery or Arminianism, or other opinion disagreeing from the true and orthodox church, shall be reputed a capital enemy to this kingdom and the commonwealth.

"Whosoever shall counsel or advise the taking and levying of the subsidies of tonnage and poundage,

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not being granted by Parliament, or shall be an actor or an instrument therein, shall likewise be reputed an innovator in the government, and a capital enemy to this kingdom and commonwealth.

“If any merchant or other person whatsoever shall voluntarily yield or pay the said subsidies of tonnage and poundage, not being granted by Parliament, he shall likewise be reputed a betrayer of the liberty of England, and an enemy to the same.”

Then, after a deafening shout of “Ay ! Ay !” from the excited House had greeted this defiance to the King, the doors were unlocked and the members, some in fear, some in triumph, surged out to give the news to the waiting city.

In the passage Hampden passed the soldiers of the King. He noted them curiously. They reduced the matter to its simplest terms. Obstruction, subterfuge, dissolution, imprisonment—these had been experienced. At the end there was naked force. It was as well to know what was in store for the Commons of England. He would not forget. But he could not guess that next time the soldiers came to St. Stephen’s it would be to arrest him.

That day, however, was far off. Charles was tired of Parliaments. As the echoes of “Ay ! Ay !” lost themselves in the vaulted roof, the eleven years’ tyranny had begun.

## VII

### THE LAST DAYS OF SIR JOHN ELIOT

ON March 3rd, Eliot, with eight others, including Valentine and Holles, was summoned to appear before the Council. Holles asked that he might be the subject rather of his Majesty's mercy than of his power.

"You mean," corrected Lord Treasurer Weston, "rather of his Majesty's mercy than of his justice."

"I say, my lord," answered Holles, "of his Majesty's power."

All were committed to prison, but it was against Eliot that the King's wrath was chiefly directed. Immediately on the dissolution of Parliament, Charles issued a lengthy statement giving his version of recent events and concluding with the query whether, considering "the great peace and quietness which every man enjoyeth under his own vine and figtree, the happiness of this nation can be paralleled by any of our neighbour countries." He followed this with a second manifesto which explained to the country at large that only a small minority of members of Parliament had assented to

“the scandalous and seditious propositions in the House of Commons made by an outlawed man, desperate in mind and fortune.”

But the stream of peers and commoners who waited on Eliot in the Tower to show their admiration and sympathy were impressed less by his desperation than by his serenity and humour. With the utmost deference he thwarted the Crown lawyers at every turn. All questions concerning the events of March 2nd were met with the words : “I refuse to answer, because I hold that it is against the privilege of the House of Parliament to speak of anything which was done in the House.” When, at last, after ten months’ waiting, he was brought to trial in the King’s Bench, he refused to acknowledge the legality of the proceedings on the indisputable ground that, except for capital offences, no lesser court had jurisdiction over Parliament.

The judges, reverting to their status as “lions under the throne,” sentenced Eliot to a fine of £2000, Holles to 1000 marks and Valentine to £500, together with imprisonment until they should acknowledge their offences and give security for good behaviour – an undertaking “seldom, if ever, asked except from keepers of disorderly houses, from women of profligate life or from turbulent disturbers of the peace.”

Eliot, remarking that if out of two cloaks, two

suits, two pairs of boots and goloshes and a few books, they could pick £2000 they were welcome to it, sent a request to the Lieutenant of the Tower that a convenient lodging might be provided for him and that he might be permitted to send an upholsterer to trim it up, as he would be there a long time. On February 27th, 1630, he was handed into custody with the words: "Mr. Lieutenant, I have brought you this worthy knight whom I borrowed of you some months ago, and do now repay him again" – for although the Tower had been his original place of detention, he had been removed for a time to the Marshalsea; "from a palace to a country house," as he described it.

The rules of the Marshalsea had been less strict than those of the Tower and a reference to this was contained in the first letter which reached him there from John Hampden.

"NOBLE SIR, – I hope this letter is conveyed to you by so safe a hand that yours will be the first that shall open it. Or, if not, yet, since you enjoy, as much as without contradiction you may, the liberty of a prison, it shall be no offence to wish you to make the best use of it; and that God may find you as much His, now you enjoy the benefit of secondary helps, as you found Him yours while, by deprivation of all others, you were cast upon His immediate support.

This is all I have, or am willing, to say; but that the paper of considerations concerning the Plantation might



## THE LAST DAYS OF SIR JOHN ELIOT

be very safely conveyed to me by this hand, and, after transcribing, should be as safely returned, if you vouch-safe to send it me.

I beseech you present my service to Mr. Valentine, and Mr. Long my countryman, if with you, and let me be honoured with the style of

Your faithful friend and servant,

JOHN HAMPDEN

Hampden, *December 8th*

(1629)

With his reply Eliot sent him the proposals for "the project of New England" which he had drawn up "for Mr. Hampden." Three weeks later, Hampden returned them by the hand of a trustworthy friend, with a further letter :

SIR – If my affections could be so dull as to give way to a sleepy excuse of a letter, yet this bearer, our common friend, had power to awaken them and command it : to the public experience of whose worth in doing, I can now add my private of his patience in suffering the injuries of a rough-hewn entertainment : to be tolerated by the addition of your sons' company, of whom, if ever you live to see a fruit answerable to the promise of the present blossoms, it will be a blessing of that weight as will turn the scale against all worldly afflictions and denominate your life happy.

I return your papers with many thanks : which I have transcribed, not read. The discourse, therefore, upon the subject must be reserved for another season when I

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may with better opportunity and freedom communicate my thoughts to you, my friend.

Till then, with my salutations of all your society, and prayers for your health, I rest

Your ever assured friend and servant,

JOHN HAMPDEN

Hampden, *January 4th*  
(1630)

As soon as Hampden had realised that there were no practical measures by which he could help in the trial and imprisonment of Eliot, he had determined to do for him the only service which lay in his power. He would be a father to his friend's sons, the seventeen-year-old John and the fifteen-year-old Dick, who had just completed their first term at Oxford. Hampden House should be their home.

But if, during the Christmas holidays, they impressed him with their "promise," they had made, by their conduct during the term, a very different impression on their tutor. When news of this reached Eliot, he wrote to Dick, who was the wilder of the two, to remind him that at such a moment, with the issue of his trial still undecided, his enemies would be watching for the least excuse to malign him. Even the conduct of his sons might be construed to his disadvantage. The boy promised amends.

Before term was ended, Eliot was in his "lodging

in the Tower," where, at Whitsuntide, his sons were allowed to visit him. When they returned to Hampden House they took a letter to Hampden in which Eliot once more thanked him for his care of them : " Ever would these messengers correct me if my weakness should be guilty of ingratitude. They are a continual mention and remembrance of the favours by which I have been obliged so infinitely."

Meanwhile his daughter, Bess, aged fourteen, had been sent to a girls' boarding school at Stepney, but the result of a lengthy visit to Lady Luke and her husband, Sir Oliver (a friend of both Hampden and Eliot, who, with them, had been imprisoned in the Gate House for refusal to pay the Forced Loan), was that a return to it seemed unlikely. Hampden, who had been staying with the Lukes during August, shared Lady Luke's dislike of boarding schools for girls and wrote to Eliot :

SIR, - I write indeed rather to let you know that you are frequent in my thoughts than for any business which at the moment requires it ; and if those thoughts can contrive anything that might conduce to my friend's service, I should entertain them with much affection.

This last week I visited Sir Oliver and with him your virtuous daughter, who meets with much happiness by her entertainment in that place ; for he is not for a man (to whom you will give suffrages) more complete than his Lady is for a woman friend.

## JOHN HAMPDEN

She gives an excellent testimony of your daughter, both in regard to the fruits of former breeding and present tractability ; but, if I mistake not, she'll not give consent to her return to the common mistress. Not for any particular blame she can lay upon her, but that in such a mixture of dispositions and humours as must needs be met with in a multitude, there will be much of that which is bad ; and that is infectious, where good is not so easily diffusive.

And, in my judgment, there is much more danger in such a nursery than in a school of boys, for, though an ill tincture be dangerous in either, yet it is perfectly recoverable in these, hardly or never in the other.

I have not yet sent for my academic friends by reason of my own employments and absence ; but this week I intend it. And when I shall thus again have before me your own picture to the life, I shall the oftener be put in mind to recommend your health and happiness to Him only that can give it.

Your faithful friend ever,

JOHN HAMPDEN

Hampden, *August 18*

*1630*

*Present my love to Wat Long.*

Meanwhile the two young Eliots rioted their way through Oxford. The reports were so disturbing that their father seriously considered the advisability of removing them from the University altogether. But Hampden, remembering his own youth, was inclined to show more indulgence than could be expected from the harassed prisoner in the

## THE LAST DAYS OF SIR JOHN ELIOT

Tower, and when, at the beginning of September, he went up to London to visit Eliot, he pleaded for the continuance of their undergraduate career. As a result they were allowed to return to Oxford for the Michaelmas term. But when the Christmas vacation came they found themselves confined to college as a punishment and forbidden to visit Great Hampden.

The boys themselves, and Hampden, imagined that this detention was due to their father's request – for Dick had, indubitably, been more obstreperous than usual during the term and something stronger than words was needed to make him see the error of his ways – but the prohibition was, in fact, a move to annoy Eliot himself. He wrote to both Hampden and the boys to explain that the loss of their holiday was not his doing, and that he even suspected it as part of a deliberate plot against him.

By the time that John and Dick next returned to Hampden, for the Easter vacation, Dick's escapades had involved his elder brother, and their tutor had written to advise Eliot very strongly to remove him from the University. Hampden questioned the boys, and went over to Oxford to examine all the circumstances. In reporting them to Eliot he stressed the fact that the company with which Dick was surrounded made it more than ordinarily difficult for him to control his unruly nature.

## JOHN HAMPDEN

Eliot decided that he would, if Hampden agreed, have Dick near him, so that contact with the conditions under which he was living might impress on him the necessity of good behaviour at such a time. Consequently, at the beginning of April the boys left Hampden House to visit their father in the Tower, and Hampden wrote :

SIR, - I hope you will receive your sons both safe, and that God will direct you to dispose of them as they may be trained up for His service and to your comfort. Some words I have had with your younger son, and given him a taste of those apprehensions he is like to find with you - which, I tell him, future obedience to your pleasure rather than justification of past passages must remove.

He professeth fair, and the ingenuousness of his nature doth it without words ; but you know virtuous actions flow not infallibly from the flexiblest dispositions : there's only a fit subject for admonition and government to work on, especially that which is paternal.

I confess my shallowness to resolve, and therefore unwillingness to say, anything concerning his course ; yet will I not give over the consideration because I much desire to see that spirit rightly managed.

But, as for your elder, I think you may with security return him in convenient time ; for certainly there is nothing to administer from a plot, and, in another action that concerned himself which he'll tell you of, he received good satisfaction of the Vice Chancellor's fair carriage towards him.

I searched my study this morning for a book to send

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you of a like subject to that of the papers I had of you, but find it not. As soon as I recover it, I'll recommend it to your view.

When you have finished the other part, I pray think me as worthy of the sight of it as the former ; and in both together I'll betray my weakness to my friend by declaring my sense of them. That I did see is an exquisite nosegay, composed of curious flowers, bound together with as fine a thread. But I must in the end expect honey from my friend – somewhat out of these flowers digested, made his own, and giving a true taste of his own sweetness : though for that I shall await a fitter time and place.

The Lord sanctify unto you the sourness of your present estate and the comforts of your posterity.

Yours ever the same assured friend,

JOHN HAMPDEN

*April 4th, 1631.*

The “papers,” which Hampden so tactfully criticised, were the first part of a treatise on “The Monarchy of Man” which Eliot was writing, partly to lessen the tedium of the prison days, partly to preserve his vision of liberty for the generations after him. When his sons arrived, this was put aside for the moment and all consideration devoted to plans for their future. Realising that Dick was “more apt for action than for study,” he determined to send him to serve under one of his old friends who, next month, was leading an expedition to the Netherlands. John, who was disinclined to return

to Oxford without his brother, was to finish his education in France, as his father had before him, and gain experience of foreign travel. With this decision Hampden was in substantial agreement, for he had little patience with that school of thought in education led by the Bishop of Exeter, which stressed the dangers of life on the Continent to young men. His only feeling was that perhaps John was too young yet for Paris. But he had had other plans for Dick, whom he loved as his own son. To Eliot's letter telling him of the decision he replied :

SIR, - I am so perfectly acquainted with your clear insight into the dispositions of men and ability to fit them with courses suitable, that, had you bestowed sons of mine as you have done your own, my judgment durst hardly have called it into question : especially when, in laying the design, you have prevented the objections to be made against it. For if Mr. Richard Eliot will, in the intermissions of action, add study to practice, and adorn that lively spirit with flowers of contemplation, he'll raise our expectations of another Sir Edward Vere, that had this character : " All summer in the field, all winter in his study " ; in whose fall fame makes this kingdom a great loser. And, having taken this resolution from counsel with the Highest Wisdom (which I doubt not you have) I hope and pray the same Power will crown it with a blessing answerable to our wish.

The way you take with my other friend declares you to be none of the Bishop of Exeter's converts, of whose mind neither am I superstitiously ; but, had my opinion



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been asked, I should (as vulgar conceits use to do) have showed my power rather to raise objections than to answer them. A temper between France and Oxford might have taken away his scruple, with more advantage to his years : to visit Cambridge as a free man for variety and delight, and there entertained himself till the next spring, when University studies and peace had been better settled than I learn it is.

For, although he be one of those that, if his age were looked for in no other book but that of the mind, would be found no ward if you should die to-morrow, yet 'tis a great hazard, methinks, to see so sweet a disposition guarded with no more amongst a people whereof many make it their religion to be superstitious in impiety, and their behaviour to be affected in ill manners. But God, Who only knows the periods of life and opportunities to come, hath designed him (I hope) for His own service betime, and stirred up your providence to husband him so early for great affairs. Then shall he be sure to find Him in France that Abraham did in Gerar and Joseph in Egypt, under Whose wing alone is perfect safety.

Concerning that Lord<sup>1</sup> who is now reported to be as deep in repentance as he was profound in sin, the papers, et cetera, I shall take leave from your favour and my strait of time to be silent till the next week, when I hope for the happiness to kiss your hands, and present you with my most humble thanks for your letters, which confirm the observation I have made in the progress of affections : that it is easier much to win upon ingenious natures than to merit it. This, they tell me, I have done of yours : and

<sup>1</sup> The Earl of Castlehaven, who was in the Tower for "a variety of incest and worse."

## JOHN HAMPDEN

I account it a noble purchase which to improve, with the best services you can command and I perform, shall be the care of

Your affectionate friend and servant,

JOHN HAMPDEN

Hampden, *May 11, 1691.*

Present my services to Mr. Long, Mr. Valentine, etc.

Do not think by what I say that I am fully satisfied of your younger son's course intended, for I have a crochett out of the ordinary way which I had acquainted you with if I had spoken with you before he had gone, but am almost ashamed to communicate.

When Hampden visited him the following week he brought away a further batch of the manuscript of "The Monarchy of Man," and promised to send him another book bearing on the subject. Before the end of the month there arrived at Hampden House a solicitor, Thomas Williamson Wyan, who had served Eliot in the days when he was Vice-Admiral of Devon and whom, in a letter, he recommended to Hampden's charity. Eliot wrote as if he were afraid of trespassing too far on his friend's good nature, which drew from Hampden the answer :

SIR, - I received your commands by the hands of Mr. Wyan and was glad to know by them that another's word had power to command your faith in my readiness to obey you, which mine, it seems, had not. If you yet lack an experience, I wish you had put me upon the test

## THE LAST DAYS OF SIR JOHN ELIOT

of a work more difficult and important, that your opinion might be changed into belief.

That man you wrote for, I will unfeignedly receive into my good opinion, and declare it really when he shall have occasion to put me to the proof.

I cannot trouble you with many words this time. Make good use of the book you shall receive from me, and of your time. Be sure you shall render a strict account of both to

Your ever assured friend and servant,

JOHN HAMPDEN

Present my service to Mr. Long. I would fain hear of his health.

Hampden, *June 8th, 1631.*

By the end of June, Hampden had read the essay and wrote to the author his opinion of it :

SIR, – You shall receive the book I promised by this bearer's immediate hand ; for the other papers I presume to take a little – and but a little – respite. I have looked upon that rare piece only with a superficial view ; as at first sight to take the aspect and proportion in the whole ; after, with a more accurate eye, to take out the lineaments of every part. 'Twere rashness in me, therefore, to discover any judgment before I have ground to make one.

This I discern, that 'tis as complete an image of the pattern as can be drawn by lines ; a lively character of a large mine ; the subject, method and expressions, excellent and homogenous, and, to say truth (sweet heart) somewhat exceeding my commendations. My words

cannot render them to the life, yet (to show my ingenuousness rather than wit) would not a less model have given a full representation of that subject? — not by diminution, but by contraction, of parts. I desire to learn; I dare not say. The variations upon each particular seem many; all, I confess, excellent.

The fountain was full, the channel narrow — that may be the cause. Or that the author imitated Virgil, who made more verses by many than he intended to write. To extract a just number, had I seen all his, I could easily have bid him make fewer; but, if he had bidden me tell which he should have spared, I had been a-posed.

So I say of these expressions; and that to satisfy you, not myself, but that, by obeying you in a command so contrary to my own disposition, you may measure how large a power you have over

JOHN HAMPDEN

Hampden, *June 29th, 1631.*

Recommend my service to Mr. Long, and, if Sir Oliver Luke be in Town, express my affection to him in these words; the first part of the papers you had by the hands of B. Valentine long since. If you hear of your sons, or can send to them, let me know.

Hampden, for fear of hurting Eliot's feelings, had been as tactful as possible in suggesting that the work was too long and somewhat overweighted with examples. Eliot, in his reply, told him that he would prefer to have his objections plainly stated, with even less reserve and praise. In the same letter he asked for the return as soon as possible

## THE LAST DAYS OF SIR JOHN ELIOT

of the manuscript, and gave Hampden news of John from Paris. Hampden replied :

DEAR SIR, – I received a letter from you last week, for which I owe you ten, to countervail those lines by excess in number that I cannot equal in weight. But time is not mine now, nor hath been since that came to my hands. In your favour, therefore, hold me excused.

The bearer is appointed to present you with a buck out of my paddock, which must be a small one to hold proportion with the place and soil it was bred in.

Shortly I hope (if I do well to hope) to see you ; yet durst I not prolong the expectation of your papers. You have concerning them laid commands upon me beyond my ability to give you satisfaction in ; but, if my apology will not serve when we meet, I will not decline the service to the betraying of my own ignorance, which yet I hope your love will cover.

Your ever assured friend and servant,

JOHN HAMPDEN

Hampden, *July 27, 1631.*

I am heartily glad to learn my friend is well in France. Captain Waller hath been in these parts, whom I have seen, but could not entertain ; to my shame and sorrow I speak it.

As the year 1631 drew to a close, events on the Continent once more caused repercussions in England. The victorious advance of the Catholic Powers, captained by the murderous mercenary Tilly, had suddenly been checked by the appearance, at the very moment when Protestantism

seemed crushed, of the Swedish King, Gustavus Adolphus. "Out of the very deeps of darkness the 'Lion of Midnight' had arisen." The victories of Gustavus inspired in England a passionate enthusiasm reminiscent of those closing years of King James's reign when it was at last decided to fight Spain in the cause of the Protestant Elector. The only person seriously annoyed by the news was Charles, who at that moment was promising the Spanish emissary to send 12,000 English levies to fight against Gustavus.

The English people, who were necessarily ignorant of this interesting move, imagined that the King would respond to the Protestant champion's appeal for help and, in order to raise supplies, would once more summon Parliament. Instinctively their thoughts turned to Eliot, who would be free to lead them once more. But the prisoner himself knew that nothing short of a revolution would persuade Charles to meet the Commons again. He saw no prospect of his own freedom, but his joy at the news of Gustavus's success was unbounded. "If at once," he wrote, "the whole world be not deluded, fortune and hope are met." To Hampden he sent the first letter telling him of the event, lest rumours of it should not yet have disturbed the quiet of the Buckinghamshire countryside.

Hampden replied :

## THE LAST DAYS OF SIR JOHN ELIOT

SIR, – In the end of my travails I meet the messengers of your love, which bring me a most grateful welcome. Your intentions outfly mine, that thought to have prevented yours, and convince me of my disability to keep pace with you or the times.

My employment of late in interrogatory with like affairs hath deprived me of leisure to compliment, and the frame of depositions is able to jostle the style of a letter !

You were far enough above my emulation before ; but, breathing now the same air with an ambassador, you are out of all aim. I believe well of his negotiation for the large testimony you have given of his parts ; and I believe the King of Sweden's sword will be the best of his topics to persuade a peace. 'Tis a powerful one now, if I hear aright ; fame giving Tilly a late defeat in Saxony with 20,000 loss ; the truth whereof will facilitate our work – the Spaniard's courtesy being known to be no less than willingly to render that which he cannot hold.

The notion of these effects interrupts not our quiet, though the reasons by which they are governed do transcend our pitch. Your apprehensions, that ascend a region above those clouds which shadow us, are fit to pierce such heights ; and others to receive such notions as descend from thence ; which while you are pleased to impart, you make the demonstrations of your favour to become the rich possessions of

Your ever faithful friend and servant,

JOHN HAMPDEN

Hampden, *October 3rd, 1631.*

God, I thank Him, hath made me father of another son.

Rumours of a Parliament persisted, and Eliot's room in the Tower became a centre of attention to an extent that annoyed Charles. Before Christmas an order was issued "to restrain access of persons of several conditions to Sir John Eliot." This was not the worst. Five days later Eliot wrote to Hampden :

My lodgings are removed and I am now where candle-light may be suffered but scarce fire. None but my servants, hardly my sons, may have admittance to me. My friends I must desire, for their own sakes, to forbear coming to the Tower. You amongst them are chief, and have the first place in this intelligence.

Hampden's reply did not reach him. He was removed to another "lodging" even darker and more "smoky" than the last. His health was breaking and consumption setting in. The King, he realised, intended to kill him, but he refused to complain. To another of his friends he wrote :

I am wholly at a stand, for the present, and have been so this fortnight and more, by a sickness which it has pleased my Master to impose, in Whose hands remain the issues of life and death. It comes originally from my cold, with which the cough, having been long upon me, causes such ill effects to follow it that the symptoms are more dangerous than the grief. It has weakened much





## JOHN HAMPDEN

of you to teach me some thrift of time, that I may employ more in your service, who will ever be

Your faithful servant and affectionate friend,

JOHN HAMPDEN

Commend my service to the soldier, if not gone to his colours.

Hampden, *March 21, 1632.*

To this Eliot replied :

I know your many entertainments and small leisure, and myself unworthy to interrupt the least particular of your thoughts. It satisfies me to have the assurance of your friendship and, when it was allowable, that I had the fruition of yourself.

Hampden, finding that the letter had reached him, replied immediately. In answer, Eliot, whose sickness demanded for its cure the fresh air and exercise which, in his cold, dark room, were impossible, wrote his last letter. His thoughts were no longer of the King, but of the King of Kings. With neither bitterness for the past nor hope for the future, he laid bare his soul to his greatest friend :

O ! the infinite mercy of our Master, dear friend, how it abounds to us that are unworthy of His service ! How broken, how imperfect, how perverse and crooked are ways in of : , to Him ! How exactly straight  
of : unto us, drawn out through

## THE LAST DAYS OF SIR JOHN ELIOT

all occurrents and particulars to the whole length and measure of our time ! How perfect is His love that has given His Son unto us, and with Him has promised likewise to give us all things ! Those that relieve us but in part, we honour and esteem ; those that preserve and save us from any danger and extremity, we have in veneration and admire ; nay, even for those that morally are good, from whom there comes some outward benefit and advantage, it's said some men dare die.

How should we then honour and admire so good a God and Saviour, by Whom we are, by Whom we have all things we possess, Who does relieve our wants, satisfy our necessities, prevent our dangers, free us from all extremities, nay, to preserve and save, That died Himself for us ! What can we render, what retribution can we make, worthy so great a majesty, worthy such love and favour ? We have nothing but ourselves, who are unworthy above all ; and yet that, as all other things, is His. For us to offer up that is but to give Him of His own, and that in far worse condition than we at first received it, which yet (so infinite is His goodness for the merits of His Son) He is contented to accept.

This, dear friend, must be the comfort of His children ; this is the physic we must use in all our sickness and extremities ; this is the strengthening of the weak, the enriching of the poor, the liberty of the captive, the health of the diseased, the life of those that die, the death of that wretched life of sin ! And this happiness have His saints. The contemplation of this happiness has led me almost beyond the compass of a letter ; but the haste I use unto my friends, and the affection that does move it, will I hope excuse me.

Friends should communicate their joys : this, as the greatest therefore, I could not but impart unto my friend, being herein moved by the present speculation of your letters, which always have the grace of much intelligence, and are a happiness to him that is truly yours, J. E.

But Eliot's friends had no mind that he should die. They joined with his son, John, to instruct counsel to appear before the judges to urge that "whereas the doctors were of the opinion that he could never recover of his consumption until such time as he might breathe in purer air, their lordships would for some certain time grant him his enlargement for that purpose."

The Lord Chief Justice answered : "Although Sir John be brought low in body, yet is he as high and lofty in mind as ever and will neither submit to the King nor to the justice of this court. In fine it is concluded by the bench to refer him to the King by way of petition."

The Court was waiting eagerly for his death. An exultant message was sent to Wentworth (who, secure now in Charles's favour, had been given Ireland to govern) that his "old dear friend Sir John Eliot was very like to die." There was little hope that the King would grant any petition. Nevertheless, Eliot sent one :

Sir, your Judges have committed me to prison here in your Tower of London, where by reason of the quality

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of the air I am fallen into a dangerous disease. I humbly beseech Your Majesty you will command your judges to set me at liberty, that, for the recovery of my health, I may take some fresh air.

Charles refused to consider the petition, on the ground that it was not humble enough.

Young John Eliot then took a second petition and delivered it to the King :

Sir, I am heartily sorry I have displeased Your Majesty, and, having so said, do humbly beseech you once again to set me at liberty that, when I have recovered my health, I may return back to my prison, there to undergo such punishment as God hath allotted unto me.

It was still not humble enough.

The Lieutenant of the Tower suggested that he should send a third, showing a more proper humility to God's Vice-Regent. Eliot answered quietly : " I thank you, sir, for your friendly advice, but my spirits are grown feeble and faint, which, when it shall please God to restore unto their former vigour, I will take it farther into my consideration."

Yet, before he died, his friends should see him again. He sent for an artist, whom he instructed to paint a faithful portrait of him, so that they might know how imprisonment had changed his body, however it might have failed to subdue his spirit. And he charged his son to hang it on the walls of

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his home at Port Eliot "as a perpetual memorial of his hatred of tyranny."

So Hampden looked on him once more, standing in his laced dressing-gown, comb in hand but with hair unkempt, his face wasted but gazing for ever with indomitable eyes, unafraid of life or death.

*He died on November 27th, 1632.*

His son petitioned the King that he might have the body for burial among his ancestors in his Cornish home by the sea.

Charles, whose wit and sensibility were equal to every occasion, scrawled at the foot of the petition : " Let Sir John Eliot's body be buried in the Church of that parish where he died."

So the body of Sir John Eliot was hurried into a nameless grave in the Chapel of St. Peter-in-Chains in the Tower of London, and from that hour John Hampden knew that there could be no rest till justice was done on those who had killed him.



my lodgings are removed & I  
 now under a doubtful light may  
 suffere but fear no fire

THE LAST PORTRAIT OF SIR JOHN ELIOT  
 (Engraved by F. Holl, from an original painting at Port Eliot)

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## VIII

### AT HAMPDEN HOUSE

HAMPDEN was too wise to mistake the bitterness of his own heart for the temper of the country. Elliot had died far too soon — a course which many might admire but he could not emulate. Hampden realised that he was certain he himself might be of future utility and that England would never be ruled by the arbitrary conditions bred of general discontent. For a cause to be successful depended on the concurrence of as many coinciding with the self-interest of as few. It depended, moreover, on the existence of a central rallying-point within which there was a Parliament again and a King. There was nothing but to wait for perfection. It was necessary to wait for forced insertion but to wait for it. He read and reflected, and the book he was reading was as "Mr. Hampden's Speeches" by David. Elliot, of the Court of the State.

It was impossible to be without a partner. He noted the country, the people, the future of the great English nation. Only a few more years.

estate at Chatillon, "as if he had a mind to stand neuter," and there "seemed to consult only his own case in a private life without giving himself any concern at all about state affairs." He read that "the civil war was first kindled not on account of the pretensions of the Princes, but by dissensions and controversies in matters of religion." And he studied Coligny's advice to the leaders of the anti-Court party, enunciating revolutionary theory: "He represented to them that there were multitudes of people all over the kingdom that had embraced the religious opinions introduced by Calvin; that, by the severity with which they were treated and the rigour of the penalties inflicted upon them, they were reduced to despair, and to a readiness, nay, a necessity of exposing themselves to any perils whatsoever, provided they could be delivered from the misery of their present condition; that they had been forced to stifle their rage and resentment so long, because they had no head to conduct them, nor any persons whose counsels and activity might put life into them."

Such conditions did not yet exist in England, but when, in less than a year after Eliot's death, Laud was made Archbishop of Canterbury manifestly they could not be far off. As soon as Parliament had been dissolved, he had set himself to crush Puritanism by disciplinary measures in the Star

## AT HAMPDEN HOUSE

Chamber and the Court of High Commission. While still Bishop of London, his dealings with Alexander Leighton, a Calvinist divine, had afforded an indication of his policy and his methods. Leighton's cause of offence was a book against episcopacy entitled *Sion's Plea against Prelacy*. Laud made a two-hours' speech against him in the Star Chamber, after which Leighton was sentenced to pay a fine of £10,000; to be set in the pillory at Westminster and whipped; "to have one of his ears cut off and his nose slit and be branded in the face with SS, for sower of sedition." When he had sufficiently recovered, he was to be taken to the pillory at Cheapside, to be whipped again and to have his other ear cut off. Then he was to be imprisoned for life. As soon as this judgment was delivered, Laud took off his cap and, raising his hands, solemnly "gave thanks to God."

The fomenting of discontent could thus safely be left in the archiepiscopal hands. Even the King's jester, though he was punished for it, gained general approbation among the courtiers for his pun: "All praise to God and little laud to the Devil."

Hampden, interpreting the future in the light of the past, realised the logic of events. When Parliament met once more, the inevitable enquiry into Eliot's death would carry the challenge to the King further even than Buckingham's impeachment.

There must be an enquiry, too, into the system which made possible the case of Leighton. And the King, if he retained his prerogative as Head of the Church and Sovereign of the State, could no more sanction such an inquisition than Parliament, if it remained true to its mission as guardian of the people's liberties, could abandon it. The whole question of sovereignty was at stake. And that issue could, ultimately, be decided by force alone, however in its earlier stages it might be controlled by finance. Though Hampden, like all men, shrank even in imagination from civil strife, he did not shrink from facing the probability of it. As he pored over his "Vade-Mecum," noting the inevitability and gradualness with which similar conditions had bred civil war in France fifty years before, probability darkened into certainty.

But all too few were the moments of quiet when he could read, or write to his friends, or indulge in his favourite pastime of hunting, or enjoy the company of his growing family of three sons and six daughters. John, the eldest, was his pride, but Elizabeth, now eleven, was his favourite. Anne and May and Ruth and Judith, too, were old enough for their father to take an interest in them. Mary and Richard and William were babies still.

His wife Elizabeth attended to the manifold duties of ordering the house. She superintended

Roads and bridges, the care of which devolved on the justices, were in a state of disrepair and impassability of which he in his journeying had too practical an experience. When, in the spring of 1632, the county was charged with its share of the cost of conveying loads of timber from Oxfordshire to London, Hampden and his fellow-justices wrote to the Council: "The ways are at present altogether impassable, or at least so foul that loads which should be carried must be very small – to the great increase of carriages and price," and asked that the timber might be delayed till summer should ensure roads that were, at least, dry.

Bridges were no better. Since the advent of Protestantism it was no longer possible to ensure their repair by the mediæval method of granting indulgences to those who undertook it. In consequence, disputes between the lords of the manor and the inhabitants of the villages as to which of them should bear the cost dragged on for years while the countryside suffered.

In 1630, the bridge at Sherington and the roadway round it were in a sufficiently bad condition for the matter to be brought up at the assizes. Yet by the spring of 1634 nothing had been done and Hampden was still holding conferences on the matter with Sir Thomas Tyrningham, the chief landholder of that district. He himself was

concerned in it both as magistrate and as landlord, since one end of the bridge was in a parish where he owned some property. Consequently when four justices were nominated to make an impartial report, he had to retire from the commission and allow two others to serve in his place.

Certain of his activities, too, brought him into conflict with agricultural and industrial interests. He offended both the Treasurer and a High Constable of the county. The story was told how, during a dispute about a piece of common, Hampden and the Treasurer were seen standing on opposite sides of a hedge, their riding-whips raised against each other in anger, but the Treasurer not daring to come within Hampden's reach and Hampden unable to cross the hedge for fear of trespass.

The quarrel between the justices and Edmund Phipps, the High Constable, was more protracted and bitter. This gentleman was a paper manufacturer whose activities annoyed the entire neighbourhood. He worked his paper-mills seven days a week: he imported plague-infected rags that started an epidemic of which seventeen people died: he then, in conjunction with other paper manufacturers, stopped the mills altogether, in order to force down the price of rags, and threw his employees on to the parish rates. As the mill-hands had been getting double the wages of the

Roads and bridges, the care of which devolved on the justices, were in a state of disrepair and impassability of which he in his journeying had too practical an experience. When, in the spring of 1632, the county was charged with its share of the cost of conveying loads of timber from Oxfordshire to London, Hampden and his fellow-justices wrote to the Council: "The ways are at present altogether impassable, or at least so foul that loads which should be carried must be very small – to the great increase of carriages and price," and asked that the timber might be delayed till summer should ensure roads that were, at least, dry.

Bridges were no better. Since the advent of Protestantism it was no longer possible to ensure their repair by the mediæval method of granting indulgences to those who undertook it. In consequence, disputes between the lords of the manor and the inhabitants of the villages as to which of them should bear the cost dragged on for years while the countryside suffered.

In 1630, the bridge at Sherington and the roadway round it were in a sufficiently bad condition for the matter to be brought up at the assizes. Yet by the spring of 1634 nothing had been done and Hampden was still holding conferences on the matter with Sir Thomas Tyrningham, the chief landholder of that district. He himself was

concerned in it both as magistrate and as landlord, since one end of the bridge was in a parish where he owned some property. Consequently when four justices were nominated to make an impartial report, he had to retire from the commission and allow two others to serve in his place.

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labourers, and the owners, by converting the corn-mills into paper-mills, had increased their rents from £15 to £150 a year, there was a general disinclination to grant relief, especially since the Elizabethan poor-rate was still novelty enough to be resented. The justices considered that as Phipps had brought his employees into the county to work, it was his business to provide for them when he threw them out of it. His profits were large enough. He had increased the price of paper and at the same time reduced the quality to such an extent that it would take ink only on one side !

Another of the duties of the justices was to fix the price of corn and the level of the labourers' wages. In this matter Hampden also aroused opposition by insisting that the price should be lowered and arranging that certain farmers could sell direct to the poor at a cheaper rate than the standard market price. Even more disliked was the order that bread must be sold at a true weight, which entailed the punishment of those bakers who continued to sell false and the appointment of surveyors of weights and measures in each market town.

If such proceedings did not increase his popularity with one section of the community, they gave the poor, the yeomen and the small landholders a confidence in him which was equalled only by the

respect in which he was held by his colleagues. The men whom he represented in Parliament, as well as the men who had sat with him there, knew – if they had ever doubted it – that his belief in the principle of government for the general good was more than a pleasant phrase. Hampden knew when to resist because he knew when to obey. The Privy Council, indulging in illegal taxation and partisan persecution to gratify the personal idiosyncrasies of the King and the Archbishop, had no more convinced opponent. The Privy Council, relying for the efficient government of the countryside on the unpaid ministrations of the local gentry, had no more faithful servant.

In the summer of 1634, when Eliot had been dead little more than eighteen months, Hampden suffered a heavier blow. His wife Elizabeth died. After fifteen years a perfect marriage was ended. At first he could not realise his loss – that never again would he know that love and quiet understanding which, in the inviolable security of his home, had more than counter-balanced the trials and troubles of his public life. Never? That thought was a traitor to his faith. He remembered the words he had chosen for the tomb where one day his dust would mingle with hers: “In Christo mortuus, per Christum resurrecturus, cum Christo regnaturus.” Carefully he composed her epitaph and had it

## JOHN HAMPDEN

engraved on plain black marble for the generations  
after him to see.

To the Eternall Memory  
Of the truly virtuous and pious

ELIZABETH HAMPDEN

Wife of John Hampden, of Great Hampden, Esquire.

Sole daughter and heire of Edmund Symeon

Of Pyrton, in the County of Oxon, Esquire.

The tender Mother of a happy Offspring

In 9 hopeful Children.

In her pilgrimage

The staie and comfort of her neighbours,

The love and glory of a well-ordered family,

The delight and happiness of tender parents –

But a crown of Blessings to a husband.

In a wife, to all an eternall paterne of goodnes

And cause of love, while she was.

In her dissolution

A losse invaluable to each,

Yet herselfe blest, and they fully recompenced

In her translation, from a Tabernacle of Claye

And Fellowship with Mortalls, to a celestiall Mansion

And communion with a Deity.

20 Day of August 1634

John Hampden, her sorrowfull Husband,

In perpetuall testimony of his coniugal Love,

Hath dedicated this Monument.

Afterwards he spent as little time as possible at  
Hampden House. It was empty without her.

A week or two after she had been buried in the chancel of Great Hampden Church, Coke died at his home at Stoke Poges. He had been in failing health for the last three years, and, as long ago as 1631, the King, anticipating the end, had ordered that, should he die, his papers were to be immediately seized. But the tenacious will of the old lawyer clung to life. Not till the summer of 1634 did he abandon the struggle. That July, Charles had his study in the Temple sealed up, and in August sent a Court official down to Buckinghamshire to rifle his house as he lay on his death-bed. Such haste, if indecent, was essential. At all costs the store of his knowledge must not be allowed to pass into the hands of one, like Hampden, who might use it as he had used it. Within a week of his death a trunkful of his papers was opened at Whitehall before Charles, who carefully destroyed everything relating to his legal judgments and his discovery of precedents limiting the prerogative. The King could breathe more freely now. Coke's learning, like Eliot's oratory, was a thing of the past.

The death of Coke, though it came at a time when it was overshadowed by a greater loss, could not fail to affect Hampden deeply. The old man had been the idol of his student days in the Temple, the model for his industrious research for precedents

in the course of his parliamentary duties, the unquestioned authority of his party, and, as Knight of the Shire for Buckinghamshire, the leader of his county. Something of what Coke had done was henceforth for Hampden to do.

In the early autumn, John spent much of his time in visiting friends. At Winchendon, the home of Arthur Goodwin (who that year, 1634, had inherited the estate from his father), he had always been a constant guest, but now, in his sorrow and loneliness, he turned more and more to the friend who, for thirty years, had played Jonathan to his David. Often, too, he rode over to Beaconsfield, where his young cousin, Edmund Waller, lived. Hampden admired his poetry and his talent for oratory, but little else. Waller, excessively vain and sufficiently wealthy, was unsympathetic to idealism. As he admitted frankly, he "looked on things with a carnal eye" and desired nothing better than to be left in peace to enjoy the esteem of his friends.

Nevertheless he had offered the shelter of his house to George Morley, the Oxford scholar and divine, who had annoyed Laud by his answer to one who, in search of theological enlightenment, had asked what the Arminians held. The Arminians, he had replied, held all the best livings and bishoprics in England. Morley was a fierce ascetic, rising at five every morning, taking only

one meal a day and dispensing with a fire in winter. His restless activity, his immense learning and his mordant wit were foils to Waller's dilettante urbanity. Hampden's visits to Beaconsfield were as much on his account as on his cousin's. On one occasion, John added to the company the leaven of his own practicality and, under the walnut-tree in the churchyard, held a muster of the trained bands of the district.

Waller and Morley, Goodwin and Hampden also met frequently at the "Philosophers' Club" which Lord Falkland gathered round him at his mansion at Great Tew, twelve miles from Oxford. In the twenty-four-year-old Viscount, whose dreamy idealism alternated with fits of impulsive and uncompromising action, Hampden discerned something of Eliot's spirit. The hospitality of his house and unrivalled library was extended freely to men of all shades of opinion and every degree of learning, who discussed politics and theology, poetry and the classics, and eagerly debated the latest news from London, which was brought them by Falkland's closest friend, Edward Hyde, a florid young careerist from the Inns of Court.

Earlier that year Hyde had helped to stage before the King and Queen at Whitehall a masque of more than ordinary importance. William Prynne, a lawyer of unsparing industry, fanatical narrowness

and dyspeptic virulence, had published an attack on the theatre entitled *Histriomastix: A Scourge for Stage Players*. At the end of its thousand unbalanced pages, in which dullness and vituperation, theoretical knowledge and practical ignorance, flourished side by side, were certain remarks which could be construed as an insult to the Queen who, like her mother-in-law, had a passion for amateur acting. Prynne was expelled from Lincoln's Inn, degraded from his degree in Oxford, fined £5,000, set in the pillory where both his ears were cut off, and imprisoned for life. Though the sentence was somewhat disproportionate to the offence, it evoked little sympathy, and lawyers of every party, including Selden (who had been imprisoned for supporting Eliot on the Second of March), combined to stage a masque for the King as an expression of their dissent from their colleague's immoderate and ill-informed prejudices.

The matter of Prynne and his punishment was, nevertheless, widely discussed, and many were alarmed that "neither his academical nor barrister's gown could free him from the infamous loss of his ears." Hampden's main interest in the episode was the part played by Laud, against whom much of Prynne's attack had been directed. The Archbishop, who was the prime mover in the prosecution, insisted that, though certain indecent plays

were a scandal, it was no business of his to remedy it. That belonged to the Lord Chamberlain's department.

Such an admission from the highest dignitary of the Church who was also the keeper of the King's conscience and the virtual ruler of the country did nothing to impress men with the connection between ecclesiasticism and moral fervour, as Prynne, undeterred by his punishment, pointed out in a biting letter. The Archbishop, however, was in a position whose difficulty only a few could appreciate. He knew that Charles himself had supplied the plot for one of the drearier and more indecent plays of 1634. Also, Laud was quite genuinely uninterested in the drama. His mind was occupied with weightier matters.

His one great desire was to enforce uniformity of belief and ceremonial throughout the Church in England, and to this end he revived the mediæval custom of the Metropolitan Visitation which enabled him or his deputies personally to inspect every church in the Province of Canterbury.

In the October of 1634 his Vicar-General, Sir Nathaniel Brent, arrived in Buckinghamshire and proceeded to reprimand Hampden for using the churchyard at Beaconsfield for his muster and for failing to attend his own church every Sunday. But Hampden's courteous explanation of his reasons so



impressed Brent that he wrote to London desiring that no further steps should be taken against him. The habit of visiting the neighbouring churches in order to hear good sermons was prevalent in the neighbourhood, since the Puritan gentlemen were anxious to listen to any distinguished exposition of the Word of God. "That sort of people," as one official report phrased it, "that run from their own parishes after affected preachers are the most troublesome part of the ecclesiastical inquisition, especially in Buckinghamshire and Bedfordshire, where they find great abettors."

It was not that Hampden disliked his own minister. The Rev. Egeon Askew was a man of exceptional ability, the author of a series of discourses on *Brotherly Reconcilement* and of *An Apology for the use of the Fathers and Secular Learning in Sermons*; a conscientious incumbent, moreover, whose pride in the building itself had ensured that the decency and order of the furnishings and fabric of Great Hampden Church were in praiseworthy contrast to the disrepair into which many country churches had fallen. (Some of Askew's brethren, indeed, considered him over-zealous for outward things and even suspected him of helping to bring the country to "papist orders of the canons and such fopperies.") Yet, in spite of his virtues, Hampden welcomed an occasional change from his ministrations.

There were many offences besides visiting other parishes or using a churchyard for secular purposes to engage Laud's attention in Buckinghamshire. In Arthur Goodwin's parish of Winchendon, for instance, old Henry Wells was dealt with "for suffering his hogs to come into the churchyard and, being admonished by the churchwarden to keep them out, he called him 'Troublesome fellow !' and troubled him by mocking and mowing at him as he went in the streets." In Sherington, several women were indicted "for unreverend behaviour in the church in pushing Elizabeth Abbott off her seat and laughing at her in time of divine service." At Cuddington, Thomas Crutie usually slept during the prayers.

More serious were the happenings at Stony Stratford, where, one Sunday, two men sawed down a maypole, and at Chalfont St. Giles, where the Vicar refused to read the Declaration of Sports. Such conduct constituted a direct challenge to Laud's policy.

On the Primate's advice, the King had republished his father's "Declaration of Sports" in an attempt to check the growing Puritan habit of observing Sunday as a holy day instead of a holiday. Henceforth, Charles decreed, men were not to be discouraged from dancing and drinking and setting up maypoles as soon as Sunday afternoon service

was over. In order that every parish should be acquainted with the royal will, the Declaration was appointed to be read from all the pulpits of the land. Many incumbents, like the parson at Chalfont St. Giles, disobeyed altogether. Some stood in the pulpit with their fingers in their ears while the clerk read the offending document. Others discovered more ingenious methods of disapproval, like the London clergyman who followed the reading of the Declaration by a recital of the Commandments and the remark : " Dearly beloved, ye have heard the commandment of God and man. Obey which you please."

Relentlessly Laud's measures against the Puritans proceeded. Through the ecclesiastical courts he exercised a censorship over all publications which enabled him to suppress those having Puritan tendencies and to license those which, like *Female Glory*, a highly coloured " biography " of the Virgin, inculcated Catholic devotions. Wherever possible he replaced Calvinist clergy by Arminian, — a change which, besides angering the devout irritated the cultured, because it meant the substitution of sciolists for scholars, and annoyed the worldly by its introduction of a new type of clergyman who considered it his duty to act as supervisor of lay affairs. That masculine resentment which Englishmen, since the days of the Conqueror, had

always felt against priestly interference, and which had been a main cause of the Reformation, was now rekindled. If at Court men complained that the avenues of promotion were "choked with lawn sleeves," in the country they discovered an ecclesiastical inquisitor at their own doors. Even those who had no understanding of, and little sympathy with, the deeper issues of Puritanism found themselves ranged against the Archbishop.

The Puritans themselves, forced to attend services which more and more offended their deepest convictions, resenting the order by which the communion table was removed from its traditional place in the chancel and railed in, altar-wise, against the east wall, prevented from observing Sunday as a day of quiet and meditation, turned their eyes to the New England across the Atlantic.

Four years ago, a colony had been founded in Massachusetts — the project to which Hampden had referred in his first letter to Eliot in prison. Those emigrants of 1630 were not, like the earlier Pilgrim Fathers, separatists who wished to found a theocracy as intolerant as any system they left behind, and before sailing they had issued a declaration which was to remain to posterity as 'a fundamental statement of the Puritan state of mind.' "We are not of those that dream of perfection in

this world," they wrote, "yet we desire you would be pleased to take notice of the principals and body of our company as those who esteem it our honour to call the Church of England, from whence we rise, our dear Mother, and cannot part from our native country, where she especially resideth, without much sadness of heart and many tears in our eyes, ever acknowledging that such hope and part as we have obtained in the common salvation, we have received in her bosom and sucked it from her breasts. We leave it not, therefore, as loathing the milk wherewith we were nourished there, but, blessing God for the parentage and education, as members of the same body shall always rejoice in her good and unfeignedly grieve for any sorrow that shall ever betide her : and while we have breath sincerely desire and endeavour the continuance and abundance of her welfare, with the enlargement of her bounds in the Kingdom of Jesus Christ."

The Church which they were establishing in their new home was the Church of England as she had been before the Laudian innovations. There were those, however, who, unable to leave the country, found themselves compelled to leave the Church in order to worship simply in their own fashion. In the spring of 1634, Hampden, as Justice of the Peace, had received orders to make a search for those sectaries who, "under pretence of repetition

of sermons" kept "private conventicles and exercises of religion by the laws of the realm prohibited." In his own constituency of Wendover, such practices were suspected of two men who absented themselves from Church on Sunday and kept an unlicensed school. They, indeed, were presented at an ecclesiastical court, but, in general, Hampden had too much sympathy with the discontents to press the matter unduly – a circumstance which led some to suspect that he was secretly, as Lord Saye was openly, in sympathy with these more extreme Puritans, the dissenters.

Hampden's interest, however, was chiefly in the emigration schemes which were becoming increasingly important. Though in the two years immediately after the Massachusetts venture only three hundred and forty people had sailed to America, the increasing interference which resulted from Laud's elevation to the archbishopric had driven seven hundred across the sea in 1633, and at the beginning of 1634 an even greater number were preparing to follow them. Laud was alarmed. The success of Puritanism abroad might endanger the success of his own plans at home. In December an order was issued by the Privy Council that no man who was sufficiently wealthy to be liable to taxation was to go to New England without a special permit from the Council, and that no poorer

person was to go without a certificate of orthodoxy from his clergyman.

But if emigration was temporarily checked, expansion in America itself was increasing. During the closing months of 1634, Hampden was personally concerned in a phase of it. In 1632, the Earl of Warwick had made over a grant of land south of the Massachusetts settlement to twelve Puritan gentlemen of whom Hampden was one. The leading patentees were the bitter Lord Saye and his inseparable friend, Lord Brooke, a youth of extraordinary charm, who at twenty-six was already a mystic and a philosopher. Lord Saye had actually offered to go out in person to the new colony provided that he might rule it and establish there an hereditary aristocracy. "Old Subtlety" had a lively sense of his own dignity. "No wise man," he said, "would be so foolish as to live where every man is master and masters must not correct servants: where wise men propose and fools deliberate." His offer was refused by the colonists.

As the time, however, had obviously come to develop the new territory (known by the Indians who inhabited it as Quonoktacut, "the land on the long river") the twelve men each contributed his share of money to the enterprise and commissioned a son of the Governor of Massachusetts to start a plantation there. So, in 1635, a small band of

colonists from Massachusetts founded, in Connecticut, a fort which, in honour of their patrons, they named Saybrook ; and John Hampden, the “ chief gentleman of England,” possessed a stake in the New England which was coming into being on the edge of civilisation. If events so decided, it could be his refuge.

But that same year came at last the moment for which he had so long been quietly waiting. The King, untaught by the Forced Loan, challenged him again, and this time John Hampden stood forward alone to defend the liberties of England.



## IX

### TWENTY SHILLINGS

ON August 4th, 1635, Sir Peter Temple, Sheriff of Buckinghamshire, received an order from the King. His Majesty, so the writ informed him, had been given to understand that "certain thieves, pirates and sea-robbers, as well Turks as others, confederated together" had wickedly taken away and despoiled ships, goods and merchandises of English traders. To combat this menace he desired that by March 1st the county of Buckinghamshire should have provided him with a ship of war of 450 tons, "with men as well skilful officers as able and experienced mariners, a hundred and four score at least; as also with a sufficient quantity of cannon, muskets, gunpowder, pikes and spears and other arms necessary for war." If the inhabitants of the county did not produce the actual ship and offer themselves for service in it, they were to pay the financial equivalent of £4500.

So it came about that Hampden found himself assessed for various amounts in the several parishes where his estates lay. For his property in

Stoke-Mandeville he was rated at twenty shillings.

Nothing would have more greatly surprised and annoyed the King than to have been presented with the specified ship. He had, certainly, based his demand for it on the sovereign's right to personal service from his subjects, but even in mediæval times, from which his precedent was drawn, men had commuted their services for money. And it was their money he wanted now. On the very day the writ was issued he was having trouble with Laud on the subject of finance.

Charles had a sudden whim to enlarge the boundaries of the Royal Park at Richmond. As several owners of the adjoining property refused to part with it, he built a wall round the park in order to destroy the value of their land. This alone cost him £10,900, and the amount required for compensating those who were willing to come to terms with him would be many thousands more. The Archbishop, who had reduced the King's accounts to some sort of order and was gradually extricating him from debt, was enraged, and remarked heatedly at that meeting of the Treasury Board that this was not the time to spend anything on buildings for show. He was informed that it was not for him to discuss whether his Majesty's plans were good or bad, but to assist in putting them into execution.

Laud's mortification was understandable. During

the ten years of Charles's reign he and his colleagues had reduced the annual deficit on the ordinary revenue of the Crown from £50,000 to £18,000, in spite of the fact that the expenditure had risen by £146,000. A monopoly granted to a soap company was expected to yield another £20,000, which should have more than balanced the budget. But such calculations left out of account the King's personal extravagance. Charles, at thirty-five, was spending on himself and his family over £60,000 a year more than had the feckless James at the height of his infatuation for Buckingham.

Apart from the extraordinary budget, which showed a deficit of £250,000, and the King's personal debts of £1,000,000 – present reminders of the past wars, which, in any case, were unlikely to be paid – Laud by his reorganisation had made it possible for the King “to live of his own.” As long as peace continued, Parliament need never meet again – and the indefinite suspension of Parliament was vital to the success of Laud's ecclesiastical policy. So, both for his master's sake and his own, he advocated a policy of strict financial retrenchment.

A certain amount of ingenuity was, of course, necessary to raise the money which would obviate the necessity for subsidies. The Petition of Right had made it illegal for the Crown to levy taxes without Parliamentary consent, and, as Charles was

By this means Charles had raised £104,000 that year to add to the not inconsiderable sum derived from *tonnage and poundage* for naval expenses. On the Navy he spent about £40,000.

Encouraged by his success, he decided that if he extended the demands to the inland counties, his receipts could be doubled. Nor was there any good reason why he should not do so. If "the wooden walls are the best walls of this kingdom," as the Lord Keeper put it, it was only "just and reasonable" that the whole country, and not merely the sea-board, should assist in their upkeep. To the safety of all, all should contribute. So on August 4th 1635, was issued that writ of ship-money which, extending it for the first time to the inland counties, duly arrived in Buckinghamshire.

Unfortunately for the King, John Hampden and his friends saw the matter somewhat differently. They were quite ready to admit that that which concerned all should be paid for by all, but they believed that it should also be discussed by all. If indeed there was so grave a menace to the kingdom that an additional £208,000 was suddenly needed for defence, action should be taken – and that action should be the calling of Parliament to consider the matter. The fact that no such danger was apparent, but that the King, by the novel extension of a long-abandoned expedient, had

discovered a new method of evading the taxation clause of the Petition of Right, outweighed, in their minds, all other considerations. They realised that if Charles used the money for the privy purse he could rule indefinitely without Parliament. Hampden saw that as clearly as Laud. If, on the other hand, he devoted it to its avowed purpose of equipping an armed force under his command in time of peace, it was even more dangerous. So, however the proceeds were employed, the success of ship-money meant the failure of freedom.

But if the real issue was political, the apparent dispute was legal. Hampden and his friends determined to resist the levy because of the motives of the King and the consequences to the country ; but the only arguments which could be permitted to appear concerned the King's right in law to extend ship-money to a county not on the sea-coast. On this ground Charles forestalled them. In December, disturbed by the refusals to pay in many of the counties – especially in Oxfordshire, where Lord Saye was active ; in East Anglia, where Oliver Cromwell was concerning himself with affairs ; and in Buckinghamshire, where Hampden headed the list of recalcitrants – he appealed to the judges for their ruling on the matter.

Without any difficulty the new Lord Chief Justice, Finch (who had been Speaker of the House of

Commons in the last Parliament and still resented the indignities thrust upon him on the closing day), provided an answer signed by ten of the twelve judges : " I am of the opinion that as where the benefit doth more particularly redound to the ports or maritime parts, as in the case of piracy or depredations on the seas, there the charge hath been and may lawfully be imposed upon them according to precedents of former times ; so when the good and safety of the kingdom in general is concerned, and the whole kingdom in danger – of which his Majesty is the only judge – there the charge of the defence ought to be borne by all the kingdom in general."

Fortified by this finding, Charles, on January 25th, 1636, issued writs directing the new sheriffs, who had been appointed in the interval, to expedite the collection and to provide new returns. Sir Heneage Proby, who had succeeded Sir Peter Temple as Sheriff of Buckinghamshire, obeyed the order, but was still unable to include Hampden's name in the list of subscribers.

Hampden's choice was not easy. Circumstances had altered considerably since he had first come into opposition with the Court by opposing the Forced Loan. Then his resistance had been countenanced by the judge's decision that the loan was illegal and that he, therefore, was in the right. Now he had

to face the fact that, according to the same authority, the ship-money levy was legal and that he, therefore, was in the wrong. His strength was that the years between, though increasing rather than lessening his respect for law, had taught him to enquire more carefully into the nature of specific enactments. One of the judges, Berkeley, had openly declared that "many things which might not be done by the rule of law might be done by the rule of government." This could only mean that the King, with the help of the bench, intended to use laws to overthrow Law. Hampden, convinced of the political necessity for his action, could also claim that he was acting in accordance with "the fundamental laws of England" – a phrase which had just come into existence and was soon to ring through the land. For behind Acts of Parliament and royal prerogatives, behind even the Petition of Right and Magna Carta itself, lay the will of the English people, the "imperishable vitality of the nation," which ultimately was the only sanction, as it was the sole origin, of all law.

By the end of January, in spite of the new orders, only £119,000 of the £208,000 had been paid. By the autumn, fourteen months after the issue of the original writs, not more than £20,000 was still outstanding, and of the £4500 demanded of Buckinghamshire, only £188 1s. 11d. was withheld. Thus,

if the levy had not been the unqualified success Charles had hoped, the passive resistance to it had not been sufficiently powerful seriously to disturb him. Accordingly, on October 6th, 1636, he issued a third writ of ship-money, thereby suggesting to the nation that it was to be an annual tax. And at this point he was warned.

The aged Earl of Danby, an Elizabethan veteran whose loyalty was above suspicion, wrote to Charles that "as an old servant of the Crown he could no longer refrain from representing to him the universal discontent of his subjects. The new levies of money were repugnant to the fundamental laws of England and to those privileges which their ancestors and themselves had till the present time enjoyed." When the King read the letter, his colour changed and he strode angrily about the room, unable to conceal his annoyance. But on reflection he was sufficiently impressed to resort once more to the judges – a decision which was strengthened by the rumour that a project was being mooted in Buckinghamshire to test the legality of his demand in open court.

"Finding that some few," he wrote, "haply out of ignorance what the laws and customs of this our realm are, or out of a desire to be eased and freed in their particulars, how general soever the charge ought to be, have not yet paid and contributed the



several rates and assessments that were set upon them ; and foreseeing, in our princely wisdom, that from hence divers suits and actions are not unlikely to be commenced and prosecuted in our several courts at Westminster : We, desirous to avoid such inconveniences, and out of our princely love and affection to all our people, being willing to prevent such errors as any of our loving subjects may happen to run into, have thought fit in a case of this nature, to advise with you, our judges.” To avoid unnecessary delay and equivocation, he this time asked them two specific questions : “ When the good and safety of the kingdom in general is concerned, and the whole kingdom is in danger – whether may not the King by writ under the Great Seal command all the subjects of this kingdom, at their charge, to provide and furnish such number of ships, with men, victuals and munition, and for such time as he shall think fit, for the defence and safeguard of the kingdom from such danger and peril, and by law compel the doing thereof in case of refusal or refractoriness ? And whether, in such case, is not the King the sole judge, both of the danger and when and how the same is to be prevented and avoided ? ”

To both the questions all the judges answered in the affirmative. Croke and Hutton, who had refused to sign the earlier document, added their

names on the ground that, in such a case, it was the practice for the minority to be bound by the majority. On February 14th, 1637, their answer was published in all the courts and ordered to be read at the assizes. The matter was settled. None of the King's loving subjects need now waste their time and substance in appealing to a Court of Justice. They could have no chance of success, since the verdict had been given in advance.

Wentworth, watching events from Ireland, wrote to the King : " It is plain indeed that the opinion delivered by the judges declaring the lawfulness of the assignment for the shipping is the greatest service that profession hath done the Crown in my time. But unless his Majesty hath the like power declared to raise a land army upon the same exigent of state, the Crown seems to me but to stand upon one leg." Wentworth, engrossed in the practical task of governing the turbulent Irish, had come to the same conclusion as Hampden, poring over his book in Buckinghamshire. In the coming struggle for power, the issue must be decided by force. But the two men, who had once resisted the King together, were now irrevocably on opposite sides. Wentworth saw that, with a private Army as well as a personal Navy, the King could carry out in England a policy no less " thorough " than that which he himself was demonstrating in Ireland, and

the triumph of a centralised despotism would be complete. But Hampden moved first.

In spite of his knowledge that the judges' answer made it impossible for him to gain a favourable verdict, he determined that his case should be fought out at Westminster, so that at least the country should know that Charles did not lack a challenger. He held frequent conferences with Lord Saye, who wished his refusal also to be taken to the courts, and with Oliver St. John, his cousin-by-marriage, who, as a lawyer, was willing to undertake his defence.

St. John, taciturn, proud and reserved, had been imprisoned in 1629 for his supposed connection with a curious document which urged the King "to bridle the impertinency of Parliament" by establishing a military tyranny and imposing taxes on the sole authority of the Crown. The paper had been discovered by Wentworth, who, stung by its satirical caricature of his own political creed, had shown it to Charles and advocated action. Though nothing had been proved against St. John, a certain appropriateness in his undertaking of Hampden's case, in view of the issues involved, did not escape notice.

It was eventually decided that the matter of ship-money should be fought out on twenty shillings. That assessment on Hampden's Stoke-Mandeville

property had the merit of simplicity. It was so small that, in comparison with his great wealth, the withholding of it could not be regarded, even by the most prejudiced, as anything but a matter of principle.

On March 9th a writ was directed to the Sheriff of Buckinghamshire from Chancery ; on May 5th proceedings were started in the Exchequer Court ; and on the 20th a writ was issued against John Hampden requiring him to show cause why the sum assessed upon him should not be satisfied. His reply was a complaint that by such proceedings he had been unjustly and grievously disquieted and that the matters contained in the writs were not sufficient to oblige him legally to comply with them. It was a quiet opening. But the repercussions were considerable. Suddenly Hampden's name was on all tongues, "every man enquiring," as Edward Hyde wrote, "who and what he was that durst at his own charge support the liberty and property of the kingdom and rescue his country from being made a prey to the Court." The country gentleman, almost unknown outside his own neighbourhood and a circle of Parliamentarians, was now a national figure.

The case, however, could not be heard till the Trinity Term, and during the summer, while London was discussing the prospects of the trial,



THE MEMORIAL TO HAMPDEN AT STOKE-MANDEVILLE

"For these lands in Stoke-Mandeville, John Hampden  
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a more spectacular excitement was provided for its citizens.

From his prison William Prynne had managed to put into circulation additional libels against Laud, and his efforts had been seconded by the Rev. Henry Burton and John Bastwick, a physician, who, in unlicensed pamphlets, inveighed against bishops in general and the Archbishop in particular. Together they were brought before the Star Chamber. Prynne was sentenced to have the remaining stumps of his ears cut off and to be branded again, this time with S L for "seditious libeller." Burton and Bastwick were to lose their ears. All three were to be fined £5000 each, to stand in the pillory, after which they were to be sent to solitary confinement in remote castles.

The torture was carried out on the last day of June. When, three years before, Prynne had stood in the pillory, no sympathy was shown him. Now the crowds in Palace Yard, watching his ordeal, gave such a shout of anger that Charles could hear it in Whitehall Palace. "S L" was interpreted otherwise than was officially intended. It stood, men said, for the Scars of Laud.

The path to the pillory was strewn with flowers. Burton's wife tried to hearten him by proclaiming that she was prouder of that day than of her wedding-day, and a woman in the throng called





No doubt but that the scene witnessed in Palace Yard and that to come in the Exchequer Court were connected – but in a more general way than Charles was willing to believe. The seizure of St. John's papers on the suspicion that he had drawn up Burton's answer to the Star Chamber revealed no evidence of the fact, and on November 6th, 1637, he rose unhindered before all the judges to open Hampden's case against the Crown. His argument lasted for three days.

St. John's difficulties were considerable. Not only was he arguing knowing that, with two exceptions, the whole bench was against him, but he was bound, as a lawyer, to accept as a basis of his argument the judges' published answers to the King's questions. He was thus precluded from disputing either the King's authority to extend the levy to inland counties or his sole competence to decide whether the danger was sufficient to warrant it. When first the writs were issued, both these grounds had seemed to offer excellent material for legal dispute. Now they were cut from under his feet and he had to begin his speech by admitting frankly Charles's right in both.

Another drawback was that no hint could be given of the real reason for his client's refusal. Everyone, the judges no less than the populace, knew that Hampden's was a political, not a legal,

to him as he passed : " Sir, every Christian is not worthy of the honour which the Lord hath cast on you this day." Bastwick's wife ascended the scaffold with her husband and, before all the people, solemnly kissed him on the mouth and afterwards on the ears. Even the executioners were moved, and attempted, by easing the weight on the neck, to alleviate the discomfort of the pillory for the sufferers. Nor did they gag them. Conquering their pain, they were thus able to address the crowd and state publicly their case against Laud. Before night had fallen, London had seen the first political demonstration for many years. The shout to which Charles did not listen was the distant thunder that should have warned him of the impending storm.

Laud was very angry. " What say you," he wrote to Wentworth, " that Prynne and his fellows should be suffered to talk what they pleased while they stood in the pillory ? "

Yet not in the emotional excitement of a public square but in the restrained quietness of a court of law were the words for which England was waiting to be spoken, unhindered by King or Archbishop. The vivid sight of unjust suffering might stir the abortive sympathy of a London crowd, but it was reasoned argument, burdened with learning, formal and remote, which was to give a lead to the country.

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objection. Yet no such reference could be permitted to appear. A court of law could not take cognisance of anything so vague as "the fundamental laws of England."

St. John, therefore, concentrated on one point. In what manner was the King to use the power which he undoubtedly possessed? In one way only, he submitted — through Parliament. Just as, for example, the King's power of delivering judgment could be put into effect only through the judges, so his power of raising money outside the ordinary revenue could be used only through Parliament. "For the law of England, for the applying of that supreme power which it hath settled in His Majesty, to the particular causes and occasions hath set down a method and known rules, which are necessarily to be observed."

The reason for such a rule, he suggested, was not far to seek. Without a Parliament, which represented the people whose goods were being sacrificed, no limit would be set on the demands a King might make, and "it would come to pass that, if the subject hath anything at all, he is not beholden to the law for it, but it is left entirely in the mercy and goodness of the King."

There were, it was quite true, times of sudden danger when, for the safety of the country, all rights of property were in abeyance. "In these times of

## TWENTY SHILLINGS

war not only His Majesty, but likewise every man that hath power in his hands, may take the goods of any within the realm, pull down their houses or burn their corn, to cut off all victuals from the enemy, and do all other things that conduce to the safety of the kingdom without respect had to any man's property. The laws already established are silent in such times."

But the ship-money writ was not issued in such times. On August 4th, 1635, payment was demanded for a ship which was not required till March 1st, 1636. Was there any reason why, with seven months to spare, Parliament could not have been summoned to grant the requisite money in the ordinary way? The case, it seemed, reduced itself to this : " In a time of peace, his Majesty's vigilance foresees a danger likely to ensue : the supplies for prevention of this danger will serve if brought in in seven months after." The question was " whether, in this case, without their consents in Parliament, his Majesty may alter the property of his subjects' goods?"

Citing precedents to an extent worthy of Coke (over 300 were mentioned by one side or the other in the course of the trial), St. John showed that earlier sovereigns had actually paid for defence services, even when they had had to borrow money to do it. It was unlikely that, had there been a legal right by which they might have imposed a levy, they

would have so acted. The claims of the present monarch were thus implicitly contradicted by the non-claims of past monarchs. "The non-claims, therefore, of so many kings and queens," said St. John in conclusion, "I shall present unto your Lordships as so many declarations of their general consents that, without assent in Parliament, they could not have laid the like assessment upon any of their subjects as is now laid upon my client."

When St. John's speech was over, his name was linked with Hampden's not merely as client and counsel but as a fellow-guardian of liberty. He had spoken to England, and England applauded. In spite of his handicaps, he had contrived to raise the argument to the plane on which the matter in reality moved. Everyone knew why Parliament had not been summoned during those seven months. Everyone knew, moreover, that if Charles had his way Parliament would never be summoned again. And St. John had emphasised the consequences. Here, in words of authority, publicly spoken, was echoed the thought of every gentleman in the land, which one diarist had noted privately: "By the same right the King, upon like pretence, might gather the same sum ten, twelve or a hundred times redoubled, and so to infinite proportions to any one shire, when and as often as he pleased; and so no man was, in conclusion, worth anything."

On November 11th, the Solicitor-General, Sir Edward Lyttelton, commenced his reply for the Crown. He suggested that the rights of property could not be endangered by taking what was needed for the defence of property. This debating-point was his only positive contribution to the argument. His attempt to answer his opponent merely strengthened St. John's argument. He admitted that the levy was legal only in time of danger, and then because danger beget necessity – as St. John himself had pointed out. He considered, however, that a danger which would manifest itself in seven months demanded more speedy measures than the calling of a Parliament. After all, Parliament could not meet till forty days after the issuing of the writs for it ; then there would be lengthy conferences and debates, so that before supply could be granted the kingdom would be lost.

Such an interpretation, questionable even had any danger threatened, was merely ridiculous in the existing circumstances. Robert Holborne, replying on December 2nd for Hampden, retorted tersely that in the original demand “ there is not a word of danger from any empire, but from pirates ; not a word of danger to the kingdom, but to merchants. For aught that appears, a Parliament, even in the King's judgment, might have been called.”

More impetuous than St. John, Holborne, in face

of protesting interruptions from Finch, challenged the King's right to be considered as the proper judge of danger, unless it was so sudden that it was manifestly impossible to consult Parliament. For Parliament, not the King, was the main representative of the nation's sovereignty. "The King cannot out of Parliament charge the subject—no, not for the common good unless in special cases."

Holborne's argument, which lasted for four days, was—as Laud remarked in a letter to Wentworth—"very bold, to say no more."

As he went further than St. John in his insistence of the paramount importance of parliamentary control, so the Attorney-General, Sir John Banks, who, on December 16th, rose to conclude the case for the Crown in a learned three-days' speech, went further than Lyttelton in stressing the King's prerogative. The whole tendency of Hampden's counsel had been to stress the limitation of the royal power. "Surely this argument," pleaded the Attorney-General, "is made by the People or to please the People. What will the consequence of it be but the introducing of a democratical government?" In the King lies "supreme jurisdiction both by land and sea," and "he is an absolute monarch and holdeth the kingdom under none but God Himself," so that "to distrust that he will command too great a power or aid, it is a



presumption against the presumption of the law.”

“My Lords,” he concluded for his peroration, “if there were no law to compel unto this duty, yet nature and the inviolate law of preservation ought to move us. These vapours which are exhaled from us will again descend upon us in our safety and in the honour of our nation ; and therefore let us obey the King’s command by writ and not dispute. He is the first mover among these orbs of ours, and he is the circle of this circumference, and he is the centre of us all, wherein we all as the loins should meet. He is the soul of this body, whose proper act is to command. But I shall need to use no persuasions to your Lordships to do justice in this cause ; and therefore I shall humbly desire judgment for the King.”

Certainly there was no need of persuasions. Weston and Crawley, who delivered their verdicts immediately, found for the King, and, though several months would elapse before all the decisions were known, little serious doubt was entertained as to what they would be. The third judge, Berkeley, in his lengthy and considered judgment against Hampden on February 10th, 1638, replied more particularly to Holborne’s theories : “Mr. Holborne supposed that in case the Monarch of England should be inclined to exact from his subjects at his pleasure, he should be restrained for that he could

have nothing from them, but upon the common consent in Parliament. He is utterly mistaken herein. The law knows no such King-yoking policy. The law is of itself an old and trusty servant of the King's." Vernon and Trevor followed on the same side.

Five of the twelve had thus declared for the King when, on April 14th, Croke, one of the objectors to the original decision, cited over a hundred relevant precedents and pronounced the levy to be utterly illegal. On the 28th Hutton, his companion in protest, publicly agreed with him. Meanwhile Jones declared for the King, though he showed himself not unsympathetic to the popular view by adding that if the resources raised by ship-money should go into the privy purse, he should reverse his decision.

So far all had happened as was expected. Then, surprisingly, on May 26th, Denham pronounced for Hampden and, even more surprisingly, Davenport and Bramston, though for technical reasons only, supported him. Of the last four, who all were presumed to be King's men, only Finch found for the Crown, so that when, on June 12th, the final judgment was delivered, the King had won by the smallest majority possible – seven to five.

The decision, as Edward Hyde observed, "proved of more advantage and credit to the gentleman

condemned than to the King's service," since ship-money had been adjudged lawful "upon such grounds and reasons as every stander-by was able to swear was not law," the judges' arguments "left no man anything he could call his own" and every man, in consequence, "felt his own interest by the unnecessary logic of that argument no less concluded than Mr. Hampden's."

Any lingering doubts on that score, indeed, had been dispelled by Finch, who, surpassing even Berkeley, declared: "They are void Acts of Parliament to bind the King not to command the subjects, their persons and goods, and I say their money, too for no Acts of Parliament makes any difference."

Hampden had lost his case, but he had gained his object. He had focused the nation's attention on the King's principles. If any man had been inclined to dismiss, as the panic catchword of a faction, the cry that Parliamentary government was at stake, he had now the judges' own authority for the statement. The discussion of the axiom that a national emergency demanded extraordinary measures had served to throw into sharper relief that fact that such an emergency did not exist, and that ship-money was an ordinary tax. As a result of the verdict, the King pressed forward with the collection of the money, but as a result of the trial increasing numbers of people withheld it. Though, in 1635,

the county of Buckinghamshire had paid all but £188 1s. 11d. of the £4500 demanded, in 1639, of the £4500 demanded, it refused £4500. Hampden's name had become the rallying-cry for the nation.

Wentworth, hearing of these things, wrote to Laud, his temperamental antipathy to Puritanism colouring his judgment : " Mr. Hampden is a great Brother and the very genius of that nation of people leads them always to oppose civilly as ecclesiastically, all that authority ever ordains for them ; but, in good faith, were they right served they should be whipped home into their right wits." Such stern simplicity was always Wentworth's way. In a further letter he reiterated it : " I still wish (and take it also to be a very charitable one) Mr. Hampden and others of his likeness were well whipped into their right senses ; if that the rod be so used that it smarts not, I am the more sorry. . . . As well as I think of Mr. Hampden's abilities, I take his will and peevishness to be full as great."

Wentworth's opinion, even making allowance for the over-emphasis of a renegade, was not generally endorsed. Hampden's conduct had surprised his enemies even more than it had heartened his friends. " His carriage throughout," wrote Hyde, " was with that rare temper and modesty that they who watched him most narrowly to find some advantage

against his person, to make him less resolute in his cause, were compelled to give him a just testimony." A new name, also, was given him. He was called "Pater Patriæ" – a title to put him, if it be possible, said Wentworth, the faster and the farther out of his wits.

Again Wentworth (whose own ambition was to become Knight of the Garter rather than Father of his Country) was mistaken. He was reading his own overmastering egotism into Hampden's action. Wentworth was of those who mould events to their will, but Hampden's course, from the beginning, had been moulded by them. Wentworth was always agent; Hampden, instrument. Wentworth, conscious of his own talent, had determined to govern; Hampden, doubting his own capacity, had wished no more than to fit himself for whatever purpose he might be needed. It was not through any ambition on his part that he stood now as leader of the people. By accident rather than by design he, instead of Lord Saye, had been chosen as the pivot of resistance; the final choice he neither shirked nor sought, but quietly accepted. But the leadership he repudiated. That could not be for him while Pym lived. He would do the work and face the danger, but the honour of the post he refused. Wentworth's ingenuous delight in the outward pomps of office and the petty splendours

of Court was a thing altogether incomprehensible to Hampden. It was, indeed, a symbol of their essential difference. Hampden, working ever "as in the great Taskmaster's eye" and seeing life with a Puritan's vision, had a scale of values which neither Wentworth nor Laud nor Charles could understand.

And at that moment, when his name was the most honoured in England, he prepared to go into the wilderness. In the April of 1638, when six of the judges had already declared against him and there could be no doubt of the verdict, he decided that his work was done. There was nothing that could not be accomplished better by Saye or Pym, should Parliament ever meet again. In the Thames lay eight ships bound for America, filled with Puritan families. On one of these he embarked, accompanied by his cousin. Charles, when he heard of this, considered it an excellent opportunity to issue a new edict against emigration, "because the people of New England were factious and unworthy of any support from hence." He ordered that the eight ships were to be prevented from sailing and that their provisions were to be put ashore.

So, by command of the King, John Hampden and Oliver Cromwell returned to London to see matters to their conclusion.

## X

### SCOTTISH INTERLUDE

**H**ELP came from the north. While the ship-money business was in progress, Charles, on Laud's advice, had decided to provide his Scottish subjects with benefits similar to those enjoyed in England. To this end he had prepared for them a new Prayer Book to replace Knox's Book of Common Order. Every minister was ordered, on pain of outlawry, to provide himself with two copies. But the northern temperament differed from the southern. In England, the Archbishop's measures against Puritanism had engendered a sullen discontent: in Scotland, this attempt to enforce episcopal uniformity produced a revolt. The introduction, amongst an intensely nationalist people which was also Calvinist to the core, of a liturgy suspected to be modelled on Catholic devotions and known to be compiled by an English Arminian, immediately resulted in riots, petitions and open acts of disobedience. The whole kingdom, from the peerage to the peasantry, banded

itself together by a National Covenant to resist the new Prayer Book.

When, by the May of 1636, it had become clear that only by stern measures could the Scots be brought to reason, Charles sent an emissary to discover the strength of the opposition and to placate it by negotiation until he was ready to crush it by force. The man he chose for this delicate mission was his friend and kinsman, the Marquis of Hamilton, a profound pessimist whose main anxiety in life was to stand well with everybody. He liked the King and was grateful to him for recently augmenting his not inconsiderable fortune by granting him the sole right to license hackney-coaches plying for hire, but he could not forget that he stood next to Charles and his children in the Stuart succession. To religion he was notably indifferent, and as a negotiator found compromise second nature in the absence of any first principles. His countrymen, however, were, as he soon discovered, of a different mould. Sadly he wrote to Charles that the Scots would "sooner lose their lives than leave the Covenant or part from their demands – impertinent and damnable as they are."

On June 11th, the King replied: "Your care must be how to dissolve the multitude and to this end I give you leave to flatter them with what hopes you please, so you engage me not against my



## SCOTTISH INTERLUDE

grounds – your chief end being now to win time that they may not commit public follies until I be ready to suppress them.”

The ship-money verdict, which was delivered the next day, was, therefore, the more welcome, since both money and ships were now immediately necessary for a visit to Scotland. Within a week, Charles was making preparations to send the fleet, with 6000 soldiers on board, into the Firth of Forth, but when Hamilton informed him that it was impossible to ensure a safe landing, it became obvious that the suppression must be somewhat delayed. Through the autumn and winter negotiations proceeded which made it increasingly clear that the Scots, on their side, were perfectly prepared to fight the King in order to preserve their Presbyterianism. The Assembly, representing both ministers and laymen, continued to sit in spite of Hamilton's edict, as Commissioner, dissolving it. It swept away episcopacy and, with it, the Prayer Book : it re-established Presbyterian government, and, reversing Laud's principles but adopting his procedure, it ejected the non-Calvinist ministers.

By the New Year the King decided to answer these “impertinent and damnable” proceedings with an army of between 20,000 and 30,000 men and to lessen the severe drain on the royal exchequer by the usual revival of mediæval customs. Feudal

barons, by the nature of their tenure, were obliged to follow the King's banner to war. Charles, therefore, now summoned every peer of the realm to appear in person, together with a following consonant with his dignity, for what was euphemistically described as the defence of the Border. He calculated that thus he would raise at least 1200 good horse for nothing.

Lord Brooke disobeyed the summons, on the ground that he "did not apprehend himself obliged to any aid of that nature but by Parliament." Lord Saye, as was to be expected, agreed with him. When it was pointed out, however, that technically they had no case, both prepared to join an army whose distinguishing feature was a unanimous lack of enthusiasm.

Charles entrusted the command of this army to a Catholic earl, whose credentials were his theological hatred of Calvinism ; appointed the Queen's favourite General of the Horse and entered into secret negotiations with Spain for the loan of some veteran troops to leaven his levies. Fortunately for him this step (which, had it been known, would have united England with Scotland in instant rebellion) came to nothing, since the Spaniards were busy with their own wars, but his policy was sufficiently apparent to lend point to a Scottish manifesto, in which the Covenanters appealed

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directly to the English nation. They were, they affirmed, anxious to remain on good terms with their southern neighbours ; they were not disloyal to the King ; all the mischief was due to some “ Churchmen of the greatest power in England,” and if an English Parliament were called it would, surely, exonerate them from all blame, since Scotland’s cause was also England’s.

The Star Chamber chose the day on which this manifesto was issued to condemn John Williams, Bishop of Lincoln, a kinsman of Hampden and Cromwell, to fines and imprisonment. He was to pay £5000 to the King and £3000 to the Archbishop for having in his possession letters from a correspondent who referred to Laud – though not by name – as “ the little meddling hocus-pocus.”

Six weeks later, Charles, having ridden to York that his presence might inspire the army with personal loyalty, required every noble to take an oath to fight for him “ to the utmost hazard of their life and fortune.” As this obviously put all their property at his disposal, they refused. The wording was altered to “ the utmost of their power and hazard of their life.” Saye and Brooke refused even this and were committed to custody. But this time they were within their rights and were at last permitted to return to their homes.

Charles did not return till August, by which time

## JOHN HAMPDEN

he had concluded an agreement with the Scots, forced on him by the manifest superiority of their army which, when it appeared, he did not dare to engage. By the Treaty of Berwick both sides were to disband their troops and the ecclesiastical government was to be left in the hands of the Assembly. On arriving at Whitehall, Charles's second act was to direct the bishops secretly to draw up a protest against the legality of the Assembly. His first was to have a report of the Berwick conversations burnt by the public hangman.

Laud now decided that the time was ripe for reviving the practice of burning heretics. The cardinal sin of the Scots was that their action was a practical denial of the King's claim to be Head of the Church. That summer a stone-mason of Dover had independently arrived at the same conclusion and, as a logical consequence, had refused to take the Oath of Supremacy. Since, in addition, he had absented himself from church and expounded the Scriptures in his own house, Laud considered that he would make an excellent example and busied himself in enquiring into the legal formalities attendant on a public burning. The stone-mason, however, took the oath on the second time of asking, and Laud was thus forced to abandon his experiment.

That autumn the Archbishop gained a valuable

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ally. Wentworth, returning to England, was received unequivocally into the King's confidence. Having successfully governed Ireland and submitted, by letter, pertinent advice on dealing with Scotland, he now appeared as a strong man capable of managing England. He decided that, next summer, the Scots must be subdued. And, to ensure an adequate force, Parliament must be summoned. Of this, having no fear of the Commons, he was convinced. The nation must show a united front to the Covenanting rebels. Aided by Hamilton and Laud – whose objections to meeting the Houses paled into insignificance beside his fury at the Scots – Wentworth forced this decision through the Privy Council, and, in November, an astonished and delighted country heard that the King had decreed that on April 13th, 1640, Parliament should meet once more.

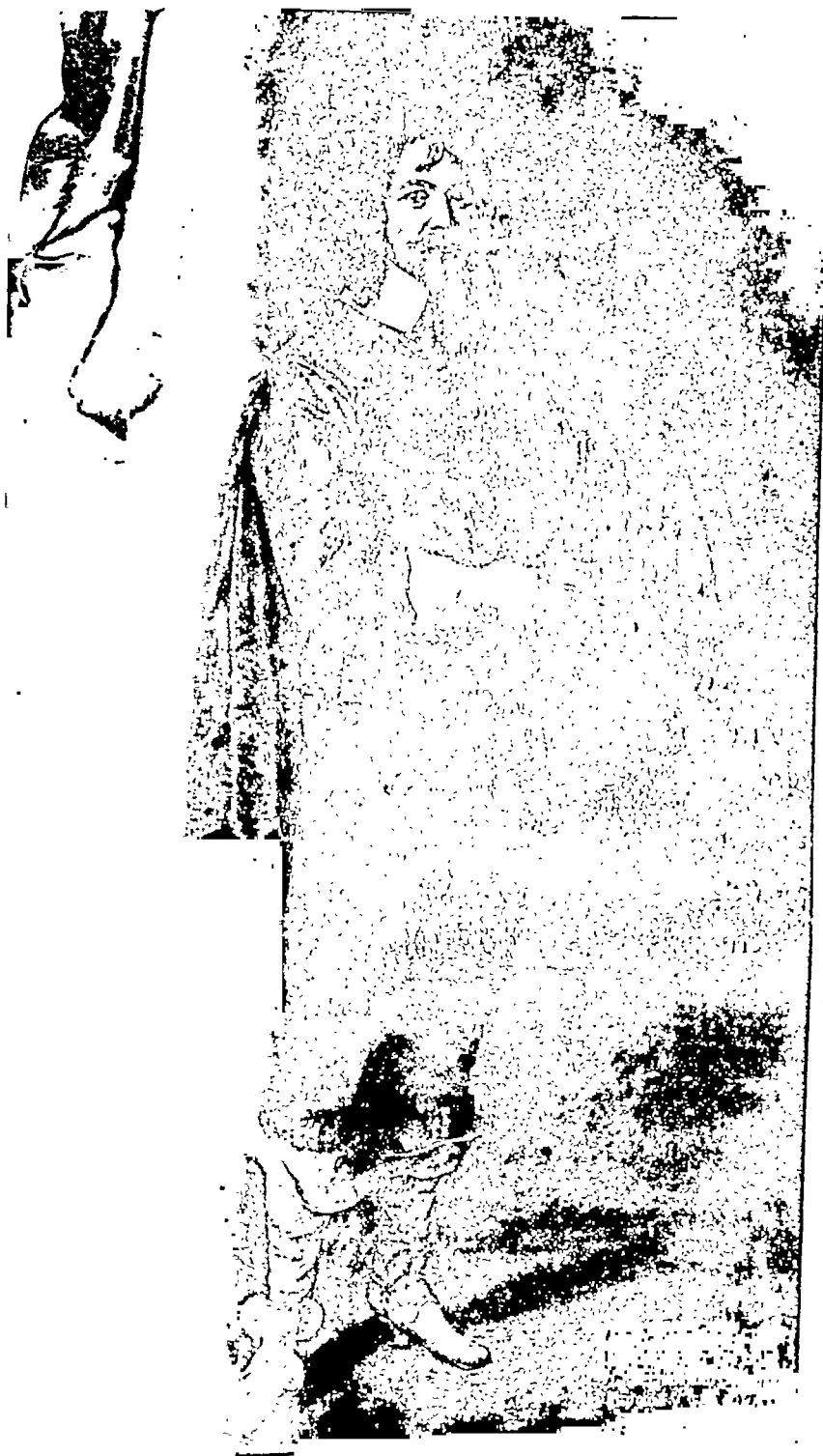
As a preliminary to that auspicious event, Valentine and Strode, Eliot's companions in captivity, were released from their eleven years' imprisonment and Wentworth was created Earl of Strafford.

## XI

### THE SHORT PARLIAMENT

**W**HEN, on Monday, April 13th, 1640, John Hampden once more took his place in St. Stephen's, it was no longer as member for Wendover, but in Coke's place, as a representative for Buckinghamshire. As his colleague in that honour he had chosen Arthur Goodwin.

The path, on which there was no turning back, had led through strange places since the day, twenty years ago, they had ridden up together to their first Parliament. But they were together still, and Arthur had remained what John had meant to be – an unobtrusive country gentleman, discharging quietly his Parliamentary duties. In the new House, where his friend was the cynosure of all eyes, he was neither known nor noticed by any but his personal acquaintances. Hampden, from that moment till the end – three years away – belonged to England. His name was a symbol, adopted by some, repudiated by others. His action and his speech could no longer be for himself alone, but would reach and divide men whom he had never



ARTHUR GOODWIN : A PORTRAIT BY VAN DYCK

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seen. A new generation had arisen to whom the quiet beginnings were as a wearisome tale. In the quickened *tempo* of the present, which was their heritage, they understood little of the slow evolution from the past, which was his. To them he was a unique figure suddenly lifted to eminence by one dramatic gesture. And at such a moment, with its intolerable distortion and loneliness, he needed one at his side who knew the reality of the gradual unfolding.

Thus, in his public triumph as in his private sorrow, he turned to the man who had been with him at every step — Arthur, who had recited with him those first prayers in the candle-lit hall of the school at Thame ; discussed, among the flower-scented walks of Magdalen, the doings of Dr. Lushington at St. John's ; watched, from the ordered quietude of the Temple, Coke's struggle for the majesty of the law ; shared the quick hopes which sprang to life when Charles became King ; known the spell which lay on the Commons when Eliot spoke. If Godwin's presence at Westminster was of no great moment to others, it was sufficiently necessary to Hampden.

In the House were other personal friends — Richard Knightley, his son-in-law, husband of Elizabeth, the beloved daughter : the two Luke Sir Oliver, Eliot's friend, and his son, "great

spirited little Sir Samuel," already heatedly disputing his election and noted, in addition to his temper, for his diminutive stature and his addiction to fine clothes and good claret, — though not yet immortalised as "Sir Hudibras."

Hampden's political associates, many of whom had been with him in the earlier days, sat not as a compact body but scattered among the 499 members, most of them new-comers to Westminster. He himself was now on the benches on the Speaker's right, near Oliver Cromwell and not far from Falkland and Hyde, who, gaining their first impressions of Parliament, were the two most notable representatives of the younger generation. Opposite them were Arthur Goodwin, Denzil Holles, as unrepentantly impetuous as ever, and Oliver St. John, lost in gloom. Robert Holborne, the other counsel in the ship-money case, sat in the gallery with Sir Arthur Hesilrige, a young man who, brought up by Pym and married to Lord Brooke's sister, was necessarily in the inner councils of the group though, being of "more will than wit," was useful chiefly "like the dove out of the ark to try what footing there was for new propositions." Under the gallery sat Selden, the greatest living lawyer — "a person," in Hyde's opinion, "whom no character can flatter or transmit in any expressions equal to his merit and virtue." Pym himself was near the door, on the Speaker's left.

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The House was exceptionally full. The length of time which had elapsed between the issue of the writs and the opening of Parliament had ensured that even members from the extremities of the country were not the usual fortnight or so late but were there in force for the first day. The importance of the occasion, also, had not been without its effect. At last, on this meeting, the feeling of the whole country would be tested ; the men of Cornwall would exchange thoughts with the men of Northumberland. Charles believed that they would be united by opposition to the Scots. Hampden believed that they would be united by opposition to the Crown policy.

The responsibility which now rested on him was considerable. Pym, with his gift of lucid explanation, his compelling simplicity and reasonableness, could enunciate a policy ; the lawyers, like Selden and St. John, could support it with their learning ; fanatics, like Strode and Holles, could underline it with passionate anger ; but Hampden and Hampden alone was capable of co-ordinating various endeavours and welding diverse elements into a compact and directed force.

His strength lay in his grasp of fundamentals. This Parliament was not a new beginning but a belated continuation. Its main objective must be to conclude and consolidate Eliot's work – to make

Parliament the effective guardian of the people's privileges against the King's prerogative. The younger members might be excited about ship-money, but the man who was chiefly concerned in that matter knew that it was an effect and not a cause. There must be an enquiry into the cases of Leighton and Prynne, Bastwick and Burton, living in captivity ; but there must be, too, account rendered for Eliot, dead there. Indignation against Laud's recent ecclesiastical changes must not mean forgetfulness of earlier cases such as that of Manwaring, secure, now, in possession of a bishopric.

Underlying everything was the realisation that only by the strict control of supply could the Commons retain their strength. The danger against which Hampden had to guard was that newcomers to the House, by a combination of ignorance and deference, might trust the King to the extent of granting him the subsidies before he had redressed the grievances, failing to realise that his need for money against the Scots was a weapon to be used to the limit of their power in order to prevent – or at least postpone – recourse to more hurtful armaments.

Hampden had never been conspicuous as a speaker, nor did he now exert himself to become one. His method was the direct antithesis of Pym's. Pym was an orator, Hampden a debater. He never

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made set speeches ; he seldom opened a discussion ; but, with the instinct of an unrivalled tactician (his opponents called it “ cunning ”), he intervened at the psychological moment to give the debate the twist he desired. One member of the House described him as a “ subtle fox,” and another noted that “ after he had heard a full debate and observed how the House was like to be inclined, he took up the argument and shortly and clearly and craftily so stated it that he commonly conducted it to the conclusion he desired ; and if he found he could not do that, he never was without dexterity to divert the debate to another time, and to prevent the determining of anything in the negative which might have proved inconvenient in the future.”

With that charming courtesy, which was his distinguishing feature, he would propound questions whose irritating innocence conformed to the Socratic model, or provide answers, inserting his own ideas when most he seemed to be agreeing with his adversaries.

His apparent sympathy with points of view incompatible with his own gave rise to much misunderstanding and contributed not a little to his reputation for “ serpentine subtlety.” It was, however, fundamental to his nature. His modesty made him reluctant to force his own opinions ready-made on others. His cousin’s exasperated

outburst, years later, to self-opinionated obstructionists, "I pray you in the bowels of Christ bethink you that you may be mistaken," was typical of his own attitude. Yet the right to private judgment which he conceded, he also claimed. He held firmly to the conclusions to which he had been led by the slow, patient examination of facts. And to convince other men of their validity he considered it best to approach them through the medium of their own minds and prejudices, showing them their path, not merely prescribing the goal.

"He was indeed a very wise man," wrote Hyde, "and of great parts and possessed of the most absolute spirit of popularity that is the most absolute faculty to govern the people of any man I ever knew." Yet he spoke in debate as seldom as possible, partly from the knowledge that rarity gave an additional weight to his words, partly from a genuine preference for the more unobtrusive committee work, which had now become second nature to him. He was, inevitably, appointed to every important committee, from those dealing with privilege in its widest terms to those examining the complaints of individuals.

Much of his work, too, was done outside Parliament. At Pym's lodgings near Westminster Hall he shared with him a common table where constant informal discussions were held with any who cared

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to attend either at the noon lunch or at dinner. At other times he was seen by Londoners riding with a companion in the fields between Westminster and Chelsea, arguing, persuading, planning.

At the opening of Parliament it became immediately apparent that the King had learnt nothing and forgotten nothing. His views were delivered to his subjects by the new Lord Keeper, Finch, whose very person was a lively reminder of the past. Resplendent now as Lord Finch of Fordwich, he lectured an assembly containing those men who, at their last meeting, had held him down in the Chair and those others who, more recently, in the Exchequer Court had had the audacity to question his legal judgments. Obliquely he reproached them as he emphasised the Royal prerogative by biblical illustration, reminding the Commons that "the higher sort of counsels were reserved in the Ark of his Majesty's own Bosom," and warning them that it was "a great presumption for any Uzzah to press rashly into this Ark." Then, deserting Jewish history for Greek myth, he likened Charles to the Sun God, who was "pleased at this time to lay aside his rays" and hold converse with ordinary mortals like themselves. But this did not mean that they were to have the audacity of Phæton and "take the Government of the Chariot into their own hands." The reason, in fact, of the King's

summons to them was so that "the supplies of his subjects might be let down again like the gracious dew," for money was necessary because "some of the Scots, some men of Belial, some Shebas had blown the trumpet of sedition." How heinous was their crime could be judged from an intercepted letter from the Scottish leaders to the French King, addressed "Au roi." When the subsidies for war on the traitors were granted and the Tonnage and Poundage Bill, so long delayed, safely on the statute books, Parliament might be allowed to discuss the question of grievances.

The Commons were singularly unimpressed. Charles had expected that the production of the Scottish letter would rouse them to the same frenzy of indignation to which it had stirred him. It was true that the actual letter contained nothing treasonable, that it was written before the Treaty of Berwick (so that, if it had, the Scots would have been perfectly within their rights), and that it was addressed "Au roi" merely to distinguish it from others "Au cardinal." But the words stuck in Charles's throat. "Au roi" could only mean that the Covenanters were acknowledging Louis of France as their king. The Commons, however, ignored the letter completely, were more interested to know why Finch had made no allusion to ship-money, and opened their discussions with the pointed



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remark that, bad as the Scottish invasion was, the invasion of the liberties of English subjects was worse.

Meanwhile in the Upper House Laud moved that, as the bishops would be in Convocation on the morrow, the House should be adjourned. This brought Lord Saye to his feet, to suggest, in his most acid manner, that the presence of the bishops among the peers was not essential to the validity of the proceedings of the House of Lords. Laud replied that it was a matter of courtesy. To save any further unpleasantness, Finch complained of feeling ill, so that the adjournment was agreed to on the grounds of the Lord Keeper's probable absence.

It was Pym who delivered the first great speech of the session, which held the Commons for the unprecedented time of two hours, and was greeted at its close with applause and cries of "A good oration!" The keynote of it was the revolutionary sentence: "The powers of Parliament are to the body politic as the rational faculties of the soul to a man," and the content a reasoned summary of abuses, civil and ecclesiastical, of the past. The immediate step to be taken was to confer with the Lords to discover "the causes and remedies of these insupportable grievances" and to petition the King for redress.

Pym was followed by other speakers who specifically attacked ship-money, and though Sir Edward

Herbert, replying for the King, was tactful enough "to stroke and commend Mr. Hampden, who sat under him, for his great temper and modesty in the prosecution of that suit," the House demanded that the records of the case should be brought before it for consideration.

By April 21st there was no sign of a subsidy. The Lords were forcing a bishop to beg pardon on his knees for referring to Saye as "one who savoured of a Scottish Covenanter" – an epithet which was peculiarly objectionable in view of the fact that the English soldiers at York referred to the vermin found on their person by this name – and the Commons were engaged in drawing up a case against the Crown on a considerable number of points. Charles, losing patience, summoned both Houses to Whitehall to listen to another address from Finch. They were told that ship-money might be dispensed with if money could be guaranteed by other means, and were exhorted to imitate the example of the Irish Parliament which, under Strafford's guidance, had already voted the King £180,000. He concluded with an appeal to the Lords to do their duty even if the Commons failed. Next day, Laud added point to the implied distinction by persuading the clergy in Convocation to grant six subsidies.

The Commons remained unimpressed. They passed a resolution that "till the liberties of the

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House and kingdom were cleared, they knew not whether they had anything to give or no." News of this impertinence reached Charles at supper. He left his meal unfinished and summoned the Council to meet immediately. He was the more confident since Strafford that evening had returned from manipulating the Irish Parliament. Gout had made him somewhat later than he had intended when he wrote : " You shall have me with you before the beginning of the Parliament. I should not fail, *though Sir John Eliot were living* ! In the mean space, for the love of Christ, call upon and hasten the business now in hand, especially the raising of the horse." But he was home at last and could be relied on to give adequate counsel. He suggested that the King should inform the Lords to intimate to the Commons that the grant of subsidies ought to precede the discussion of grievances.

The Lords were likely to be amenable to the royal will. At full strength they numbered 149, of whom the Crown could implicitly rely on the two archbishops, the twenty-four bishops and the eighty-two lay peers who owed their titles either to Charles or to his father. The leaders of the minority, besides Saye and Brooke, were Bedford, " the father of Puritan statesmanship " ; Essex, the son of Queen Elizabeth's favourite, who had inherited something of his father's popularity as well

as his jealous nature ; Warwick, a jolly, free-living adventurer, and Mandeville, his quiet, conscientious son-in-law. Yet, however powerful their influence in certain matters, they were of necessity outvoted.

When Charles appeared in person to make his request to them that supply should precede grievances, the Upper House decided in his favour by 61 to 25.

Still the Commons were unimpressed. They retorted that the Peers' suggestion was a breach of privilege, requiring reparation, and continued to discuss grievances. All minor business must be put aside if the main petition was to be concluded. On that day, April 27th, the Bishop of Lincoln, still smarting under his indignities at the hands of "the little meddling hocus-pocus," wrote to ask Hampden to use his influence with the Commons to take up his case as one involving Parliamentary privilege. Hampden's reply betrayed only too clearly his fears :

MY LORD, — I should be very ready to serve you in anything I conceived good for you and fit for me ; but in your Lordship's present commands I doubt that to *make* overture of your intentions, and be prevented by a *sudden conclusion* of the Parliament, which many fear, may render your condition worse than now it is.

To begin with, our House is not the right place ; the

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most important businesses of the King and kingdom are pressed on with such expedition that any of a more particular nature will be but unwelcome and hardly prosecuted with effect. Besides that, there is at this instant a tenderness between the Lords and us about privilege. And for my own unfitness, I need mention no more but my disability to carry through a business of this nature, though your Lordship may easily conceive another incompetency in my person.

In these regards I humbly desire your Lordship to excuse me and thereby to lay a new obligation upon me of being

Your Lordship's most humble servant,

JOHN HAMPDEN

Westminster

*April 29, 1640.*

On May 2nd the blow fell. Both Lords and Commons were plainly told that, unless the money were immediately forthcoming, Parliament would be dissolved.

The House went into committee. It was obvious that the redress of ecclesiastical grievances and the enquiry into the breaches of privilege in the last Parliament would take some time – far longer, in the opinion of moderate members, than the King could reasonably be expected to wait for subsidies. The Scottish situation was pressing. On the other hand, the question of arbitrary taxation to raise fighting forces demanded an instant decision. If ship-money were still to be levied, it would matter very

little whether the Commons were dissolved or not, so that if Parliament were to grant money on this occasion, it must have the sole right to grant it generally. The Navy must no longer be financed by ship-money nor the Army by coat-and-conduct money, its military equivalent. Also, apart altogether from the constitutional aspect of the question, an Army and Navy raised by the King's personal authority would, more than ever now, be a standing menace to the liberty of the subject.

Yet, as the Commons saw it, Charles's abandonment of ship-money was the more probable in the light of his recent hint that he "was not wedded to that particular way" of supporting the Navy. They were right. Charles decided to bargain. On May 4th he sent a message to the House, intimating his willingness to give up his claim to ship-money in return for £840,000.

Here was the danger which Hampden had foreseen. To the new members it was unreasonable to keep the King waiting indefinitely when the northern situation provided so formidable an argument for immediacy. But to those who knew Charles of old it was madness to surrender their one advantage. Already Hampden and Pym were at work on a petition praying the King to come to terms with the Scots. It was to be submitted to the House for approval on the 7th, and, should it be

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successful, the necessity of haste would disappear. Now it seemed that supply would be granted first.

Yet to oppose the grant would be a tactical error of the first magnitude. Not only would it divide the House, which had been acting with virtual unanimity and must continue to do so, but it would result in immediate dissolution by a furious King, at last convinced, with a show of reason, that opposition to him was merely factious. Therefore, when Charles's message was delivered, Hampden proposed, moderately enough, that the question might be put whether the King's request should be granted, hoping that the form of the request would be considered sufficiently odd to guarantee a negative. Hyde, however, representing the younger moderates, countered by asking that the question should be simply whether supply was to be granted at all. This compromise recommended itself to many and would certainly have resulted in an affirmative vote.

But Hampden, unruffled by the calls for "Mr. Hyde's motion" or the counter-calls for his own, reiterated that the debate should be confined to the King's request "as it was contained in the message." It was at such a juncture that prestige had its uses. The situation was saved. Even those who had no sympathy with the Scots and were willing to grant the King a certain amount of money – even those

who were not disinclined to postpone till later the full discussion of the events of the eleven years' tyranny – would not sanction twelve subsidies on the strength of a bribe which, in any case, was not Charles's to offer.

Gradually the discussion, diverted from dangerous channels, resolved itself into heated protests against coat-and-conduct money, especially on the part of the Yorkshireman, Sir John Hotham, who announced that whereas ship-money had cost his county only £12,000, coat-and-conduct money cost it £40,000.

At this point the King's Secretary, Sir Henry Vane, reminded the Commons that the matter in hand was his master's demand for twelve subsidies and that he would be content with nothing less. The House postponed its decision till next day.

That evening, at a private meeting of their followers, Hampden and Pym decided that, because of the urgency of affairs, the petition about the Scots should be brought forward on the morrow. Next morning, however, they arrived in their places at the usual hour of eight o'clock to find that the King had forestalled them. He had held a special Council meeting at six and was now waiting to dissolve them.

They had sat for exactly three weeks.



## XII

### ELECTION CAMPAIGN

**A**N hour after the dissolution, Edward Hyde chanced to meet Oliver St. John. The appearance of each was sufficiently unusual for the other to notice it : Hyde was gloomy and St. John was smiling.

St. John asked : “ What troubles you ? ”

Hyde answered : “ What troubles most good men – that in such a time of confusion so wise a Parliament, which alone could have found a remedy for it, is so unseasonably dismissed.”

St. John retorted : “ This Parliament could never have done what is necessary. All’s well. Things must be worse before they can be better.”

So they parted.

At the same time the King, at Whitehall, was taking counsel of his advisers. Strafford was vehement for stern measures. “ Go on with a vigorous war, as you first designed,” he urged Charles, “ loose and absolved from all rules of government. Being reduced to extreme necessity, everything is to be done that power might admit,

and that you are to do. They refusing, you are acquitted towards God and man. You have an army in Ireland you may employ here to reduce this kingdom. Confident as anything under Heaven, Scotland shall not hold out five months."

"By the law of God and man," echoed Laud, "you should have subsistence, and ought to have it, and it is lawful to take it."

The difficulty, of course, was to get it. The Short Parliament had sat long enough to manifest that the Scots had little to fear from the English nation. Far from there being a united people behind Charles, bent on war and willing to pay for it, it seemed that England would have to be subdued before Scotland could be touched. Strafford's idea of importing Irish troops for this purpose was openly discussed at Court. "The King of England," wrote the French agent two days later, "thinks of making use of 10,000 Irishmen as well to bring to terms his English subjects as for the Scottish war." The rumour of it, reaching the Parliament men, was sufficiently disturbing.

Against them prompt measures were taken. On the next day Hampden was suddenly arrested and his pockets searched. The officers found there the correspondence with the Bishop of Lincoln and several papers and books filled with pencil notes of

Hampden. In the hope of discovering

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something, like a communication with the Scots, which could be construed as treasonable, they also rifled his study, but their expectations were again disappointed and he was not further troubled. Similar and equally fruitless attempts were made against Pym, Saye and Brooke, but Sir John Hotham was proceeded against and thrown into gaol because he "neither could nor would remember" words he had spoken in Parliament.

Then, as a prelude to financial measures, four London aldermen who refused to provide the King with a list of citizens wealthy enough to have money extorted from them were imprisoned, in spite of Strafford's advice : " Until you hang some of them up, you will do no good with them."

Strafford's reputation was beginning to spread to the populace, who had hitherto showed little interest in " the man from Ireland." They now nicknamed him " Black Tom Tyrant " and associated him in their minds with Laud, whom they left in no doubt of their feelings. The same day that Hampden was arrested posters appeared in the city calling on the apprentices to join in hunting " William the Fox," and, though the actual hunt was postponed till the 11th, the Archbishop had to take cover in Whitehall while, solemnly to the beat of a drum, five hundred Londoners marched on Lambeth.

The drummer was captured. Laud persuaded the Council to torture him. Though torture had been pronounced illegal and had long fallen into disuse, it was a proceeding which naturally commended itself to the primate. Twelve years ago he had tried to get permission to torture Felton, Buckingham's murderer, but without success. He was more powerful now and had his way. Before the execution the rack was used on the drummer and then never used again in England.

Malcontents might be punished, but money for the Army was still lacking. The City consistently refused to lend, and neither ship-money nor coat-and-conduct money was paid. (Of the £2600 demanded from Buckinghamshire on the latter charge, the county, true to Hampden's example in the former, contributed £8 10s.) The Queen appealed to the Pope for men to subdue England; Strafford supplicated Spain for a loan; and Charles decided to debase the coinage by manufacturing shillings worth only threepence, which were to be distinguished by the motto "Let God arise, let His enemies be scattered." But none of these expedients was of any avail.

As for the men, some sort of Army was, indeed, raised by press-gang and delivered over to Catholic officers, on whose loyalty Charles could rely but whose appointment did him irreparable damage in

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the eyes of the country by lending colour to the rumours of a "Popish plot."

A Wiltshire company, when their captain declined to take Communion with them, informed him that if he would not pray with them they would not fight with him, and refused to march. In East Anglia, the men broke into the churches, pulled down the new Laudian altar-rails and made bonfires of them in the streets. In Dorsetshire, a lieutenant, who had reprimanded a boy by slicing his hand from his wrist with his sword, was murdered by his men. At Aylesbury there was a mutiny, in the course of which twenty-two houses were destroyed.

The civilian population in the provinces added to Charles's troubles with his Army by complaining that billeting was in direct contravention to the Petition of Right, and that martial law was similarly illegal.

Meanwhile, from the capital, Hampden watched events. This time there could be no retirement to the country. The quiet days at Hampden House were over for ever, though occasionally the tension of those summer days in London was broken by visits to Elizabeth at her husband's house at Fawsley, which Knightley had placed at the disposal of his leaders. The arrests had warned them of the dangers lurking in the capital, but at Fawsley there was a room, centuries old, which had

been built so that no sound could penetrate its walls. There, too, they had the service, should they need it, of a private printing-press.

Lord Saye's castle at Broughton, in Oxfordshire, was also, like Fawsley, within easy reach of London and near the road to the north, now in constant use by the comings and goings to the King's camp at York and by emissaries to and from the Scots. But Hampden's home was in London, in the house he had bought in Gray's Inn Lane. And here, or in Pym's lodgings, or in St. John's chambers, or in Sir Harry Vane's mansion at Hampstead, when he was not at Fawsley or Broughton, he worked with his associates on their policy.

Its main outline remained unaltered, though the new situation demanded new measures. The Scots were still the key to it. As, when the House was sitting, it had been necessary to let them know that, in their struggle against the despotism of Charles and Laud, the Commons of England were on their side, so now, when the country's voice was silenced and Strafford was straining every nerve to crush them, that message must reach them still. To their inquiry as to feeling in England, the six peers, Bedford, Warwick, Essex, Saye, Brooke and Mandeville, signed a letter, pledging themselves and their friends in the Commons to stand by the Scots in a legal and honourable way. Their ends and

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interests were identical – “ a free parliament ” to try offenders and redress grievances, ecclesiastical and civil. But, at the same time, they refused to aid them by any treasonable means.

The Scots pressed for a more definite pledge. At the beginning of August this was supplied to them by a bitter personal enemy of Strafford, who forged the six signatures to another document, promising armed aid. With that assurance the Scots determined to invade England and thus force the King to call Parliament and submit to it their case for consideration. By August 12th, Londoners received copies of their manifesto which stated that they were appealing to an English Parliament to call on the King for justice against Laud and Strafford, whose counsels had so misled him in dealing with both nations. On the 20th the King left Whitehall for York, to place himself at the head of the disaffected remnants of his press-ganged Army and to demonstrate by his presence there that the King and his counsellors were of one mind. On the same day the Scottish Army, 25,000 strong, crossed the Tweed. A week later they routed the English force.

“ Pity me,” wrote Strafford to a friend, “ for never came any man to so lost a business. The army altogether necessitous and unprovided of all necessaries. Our horse all cowardly ; the country from Berwick to York in the power of the Scots ;

an universal affright in all ; a general disaffection to the King's service none sensible of his dishonour."

The country, rather, was sensible of the service rendered by the invaders, who marched through the north in an orderly fashion, paying scrupulously for all they took. London greeted their victory with demonstrations of rejoicing, the more genuine since the Scots promised that trade relations in the important matter of coal should remain unaltered. And on the news of it Hampden and his colleagues sat long in conference to decide the next step.

The long petition, which Parliament had had no time to present, was epitomised by St. John as a petition to be presented now directly to the King. It concluded with the hope that peace might be made with the Scots, Parliament called, and the causes of the "great grievances which your people lie under may be taken away and the authors and counsellors of them may be brought to such legal trial and condign punishment as the nature of the several offences shall require." This document, though mainly the work of the three commoners, were signed by the peers only, in their capacity as the hereditary advisers of the Crown. To the six well-known names were added six others, and the "Petition of the Twelve Peers" was carried to the King at York.

A week after receiving it, Charles replied to the



aspersions on his counsellors by making Strafford a Knight of the Garter. Then, to gain time, he summoned a meeting of the Lords alone, in the hope that by so doing he might at least postpone the necessity for Parliament. But other petitions of a similar nature showed only too plainly the feeling in the country, and the stark financial necessity of buying the Scots off at the rate of £850 a day forced him to bow to the inevitable. On September 24th he announced to the Peers that the Houses should meet on November 3rd.

The forty days of electioneering were always a time of intense local excitement. On this occasion Hampden decided that they must be infused with an understanding of national responsibility. The effectiveness of the coming Parliament would depend entirely on the unanimity with which it was prepared to act, and the choice of its members must not be left to the chances of irrelevant local jealousies. Even more important, if the accumulated work of fifteen years was at last to be accomplished, there must be a strong and compact body of men pledged to carry it out.

To this end Hampden persuaded Pym to join him in a strange and unprecedented proceeding. They would spend the forty days riding over the country from constituency to constituency, explaining the issues at stake and urging the freeholders to give

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their votes to the Puritan candidates. Pym, who was unaccustomed to horseback, consented bravely and "wasted his body much carrying on the cause." But Hampden rode through England as gladly and energetically as for years he had ridden to hounds, telling the grim men of the industrial east and the proud country gentry of the north what was afoot at Westminster.

### XIII

#### “STONE DEAD HATH NO FELLOW”

THE Long Parliament, as the new assembly came to be called, provided Hampden with new problems. “When this parliament began,” said Hyde, “the eyes of all men were fixed on him as their *patriæ pater* and the pilot that must steer their vessel through the tempests and rocks that threatened it. And I am persuaded that his power and interest at that time was greater to do good or hurt than any man of his rank hath had in any time ; for his reputation for honesty was universal and his affections seemed so publicly guided that no corrupt or private ends could bias them.” Yet, before that Parliament was much more than a year old, Hyde and Falkland had deserted the pilot in order to add breath to the tempest.

Hampden the constitutionalist and hero of ship-money united the House, but Hampden the Puritan and avenger of Eliot divided it. Men like Hyde, whose judgment was coloured by first meeting him

as the former, never learnt to allow for the consequences of the latter. So in this new Parliament it was Falkland who proposed and Hyde who seconded the resolutions against ship-money. But it was also Hyde who protested against an indictment of the King's imprisonment of Sir John Eliot. To the young lawyer it was tactful to let bygones be bygones. He could not share the emotion which shook Hampden as the Commons were told of an occasion when the Lieutenant of the Tower was severely reprimanded because air from an open window had been allowed to Eliot in his prison.

But to Hampden it was of less moment that the statute books should contain the declaration that "the charge imposed upon the subject for the providing and furnishing of ships, commonly called ship-money, and the judgment given against John Hampden, were and are contrary to and against the laws and statutes of this realm, the right of property, the liberty of the subject, former resolutions in Parliament and the Petition of Right" than that, in the name of the Commons, both King and people should be reminded that "one died by the cruelty and harshness of his imprisonment, which would admit of no relaxation, notwithstanding the imminent danger of his life did sufficiently appear by the declaration of his physician, and his release, or at least his refreshment, was

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sought by many humble petitions ; and his blood still cries either for vengeance or repentance.”

Again Hyde and Falkland supported Hampden as the House destroyed one by one the instruments by which the King had set himself above the law – the Star Chamber, the High Commission Court, impositions and monopolies, and the raising of tonnage and poundage by prerogative alone. Even on the religious issue, in its earlier stages, there was unanimity. When Hampden was reported as confessing to the House his belief in “ the Protestant religion, teaching us that there is but one God, one Christ, one faith, one religion, which is the gospel of Christ and the doctrine of His prophets,” and expressing his distaste for “ cringing and bowing and creeping to the Altar,” he had the majority on his side. Falkland himself attacked the Laudian clergy in memorable words : “ Common fame is more than ordinarily false if none of them have found a way to reconcile the opinions of Rome with the preferments of England, and to be so absolutely, directly and cordially Papists that it is all that £1500 a year can do to keep them from confessing it.” And no one denied the substantial truth, even if they deprecated the phrasing, of the official complaint against “ the great increase of idle, lewd and dissolute, ignorant and erroneous men in the ministry, which swarm like the locusts

of Egypt over the whole kingdom ; and will they but wear a canonical coat, a surplice, a hood, bow at the name of Jesus, and be zealous of superstitious ceremonies, they may live as they list, confront whom they please, preach and vent what errors they will, and neglect preaching at their pleasures without control."

But to admit these things was very far from acquiescing in the demand for the abolition of episcopal government which Hampden, as the session wore on, came to support. It was the "Root-and-Branch" petition, signed by 15,000 Londoners and reinforced by similar documents from the country (including one from 700 clergy), which first split the Commons.

Hampden, with his intense personal apprehension of God, found it difficult to understand how natureless spiritually sensitive gained help from hierarchical rules and regulations. Moreover, as he considered that spiritual tyranny was more hateful than temporal, he was anxious to ensure that never again, as during the past eleven years, should the bishops be able to force the consciences of men. His concurrence in the Root-and-Branch proposal that ecclesiastical jurisdiction should henceforth be exercised by lay commissioners appointed by the Crown sprang directly from his love of freedom and his knowledge that the lay mind is naturally more



tolerant than the clerical. The convictions of Hampden and his friends in these matters was given literary expression by Lord Brooke in a *Discourse opening the Nature of that Episcopacy which is Exercised in England*, which he wrote during the first vacation of the Parliament.

The central thought was that no power on earth ought to force the practice of the individual. “One that doubts with reason and humility may not, for aught I yet see, be forced by violence.” That was the Puritan answer to Laud’s repressive proclivities. “Fire and water,” continued Brooke, “may be restrained, but light cannot. It will in at every cranny and the more it is opposed, it shines the brighter.” Then, to an intolerant generation, he pleaded for tolerance: “Can we not dissent in judgment but we must also disagree in affection? We never prove ourselves true members of Christ more than when we embrace His members with most enlarged yet straitest affections.”

Such idealism was beyond Hyde and even Falkland, and a House which, on the constitutional issue, acted in concord was, on the ecclesiastical, soon hopelessly divided against itself. As long as the religious issue could be interpreted in political terms – as in the proposal to deprive the bishops of their power in the Upper House – Hampden could rely on Falkland’s support, but when the question

of Church government became paramount, the friendship which had started in the Philosophers' Club at Great Tew snapped in the heat of parliamentary controversy.

"I am sorry," said Hampden, "to find a noble lord here has changed his opinion since the time the last Bill to this purpose passed the House, for he then thought it a good Bill, but now he thinks this an ill one."

"Truly," replied Falkland, "I was persuaded at that time by the worthy gentleman who has spoken to believe many things which I have since found to be untrue, and therefore I have changed my opinion in many particulars as well to things as persons."

It was the public announcement of the formation of parties.

Hampden's task thus became progressively more difficult. Even in a united House he found the situation sufficiently complicated. There was the peculiar inability of many members to keep to the point; there was the reluctance of the Lords to act wholeheartedly with the Commons; and there was the presence of the Scottish Army in England which, while it prevented the King from dissolving Parliament, also demanded payment, which Parliament had to find. When, to add to this, the Commons themselves became divided, it needed all

Hampden's authority to persuade them to take the steps necessary to ensure the sound government in which alone the safety of the country lay. But, in spite of division, his authority never altogether deserted him, and at each moment of crisis he was still able to dominate the House. Pym, his leader, became the great party-man. Hampden remained unique.

The situation at the beginning of November was comparatively simple. Parliament, for the first time in Hampden's experience, was in power, though at any moment it might be overthrown by force. There was the army in the north which, largely officered by Catholics, could not be altogether relied on for loyalty to the Houses. There was Strafford's army in Ireland, which might, at any moment, be used against England. There were rumours of the King's negotiations with Spain and the Queen's with France and the Papacy. In view of so doctrinal a division, Parliament might be pardoned if, in a moment of panic, it scented a Popish plot to overthrow Protestantism which, except in the minds of the Queen and her intimates, did not exist. But in supposing that the Scots alone stood between them and dissolution, the Commons were undoubtedly right. And they knew that they must act swiftly, for over them hung the shadow of Strafford – Strafford, whose pride was so wounded

by his failure to subdue the Scots in England that he had advocated a massacre of the Scots in Ulster by way of compensation.

Immediately on his arrival in London, when Parliament was a week old, he advised Charles to arrest Hampden and his friends next day on the charge of treasonable correspondence with the Scots. At the same time the King was to review his troops at the Tower, so that, in case of disturbance, he would be in command of an armed force. But rumours of the royal intention reached Pym, who, on the morning of the intended *coup*, rose in the Commons to move that the doors should be locked. Hampden, who had once drawn up the heads of an impeachment against Buckingham, was appointed with six others to draw up as quickly as possible the heads of an impeachment against Strafford. The charge, in the few moments at his disposal, was necessarily the barest outline, and Falkland, deprecating haste in the interests of justice, asked that the matter should wait until a full investigation had been made. Pym, whose original intention had been a slow and careful examination, pointed out that unless they acted at once they would not be left free to act at all, and with the approval of the House he immediately carried the impeachment to the Lords, asking that Strafford, being accused of high treason, should be placed under restraint,

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pending the elaboration of the full charge. That evening it was Strafford, not Hampden, who was under arrest.

Between then and the beginning of the trial, nearly five months later, proceedings were instituted against other “evil counsellors.” Finch fled to the Continent, but Laud was sent to the Tower, well guarded on the way thither, lest he should be lynched by the crowd. So the Archbishop passed out of Hampden’s life to an imprisonment to which he had condemned so many. His premonition had been fulfilled. A week before the assembly of Parliament, a portrait of himself had fallen face downwards on his study floor. “God grant this be no omen,” he had noted in his diary. But his superstitious mind was troubled, guided as he was by portents and dreams. Some he frankly did not understand – as when he dreamt that he was reconciled to the Church of Rome or that the Duke of Buckingham climbed into bed with him or that, having taken off his rochet, he could not find it again. But, though he had not observed the signs of the zodiac, a fallen portrait seemed sufficiently plain. And now, like some of his dreams, it had come true.

The day after the Tower closed on him, the Commons passed votes of reparation to his most notable victims, *Pym, Baskin, Burton and*

Leighton, whose liberation had been greeted by London with wild enthusiasm.

Strafford's trial opened on March 22nd, 1641, in Westminster Hall, in the presence of the King, who as he could not appear in his official capacity, was accommodated in a special seat, screened with a lattice, like the box of a theatre. Pym led the attack, with Hampden as one of the managers of the impeachment, preparing the evidence and shaping the indictment, but not himself speaking against "the great apostate." During the first three weeks, Strafford's masterly defence of himself made a profound impression on all who heard him. Whatever might have been his shortcomings in Ireland, he was certainly not guilty of anything that could be technically termed high treason, since his every act had been directed towards strengthening the King's authority. Even his plan to use the Irish Army for a war against Scotland did not infringe the legal rights of government. The tide was running strongly in his favour when Charles decided to intrigue with the Army to march on London and rescue him by force. Rumours of this Army Plot, reinforced by the King's refusal, in spite of repeated petitions from both Houses, to disband the Irish Army, made both Commons and people convinced that their safety hung on the Earl's death. Pym realised that England must

know what he had known for months but hoped there would be no need to disclose—that at the Council meeting at the dissolution of last Parliament Strafford had suggested using the Irish Army against England. He therefore asked to be allowed to bring new evidence. The Lords demurred at the consequent delay. The two Houses at last were at odds. In Westminster Hall, Charles laughed aloud and Strafford could not “hide his joy, being now *sine die* for any further proceeding.”

When Pym made his revelation to the Commons, the result was not quite what he had anticipated. The House was so thoroughly frightened that it revolted from his leadership and followed the violent proposal of Hesilrige that a Bill of Attainder should be substituted for the impeachment, so that Strafford would merely have to be voted instead of judged guilty. The Bill was given its first reading immediately, but on their next meeting the Commons, in a more reasonable frame of mind, refused a second and decided to return to the impeachment.

On April 13th, therefore, the trial was resumed. The Earl's brilliant defence was answered even more finely by Pym. Technical treason there might be none, but surely, while seeming to bring strength to the King, Strafford had in reality brought weakness. For he had separated the King from his people. That which was Buckingham's treachery

was also Strafford's. For "the King and his people are obliged to one another in the nearest relations; they have the same interests; they are inseparable in their condition, be it good or evil. He is their head. They are the body. There is such an incorporation as cannot be dissolved without the destruction of both."

As he proceeded to elaborate this doctrine, so distasteful to Charles, who considered the people merely the property of the King, a spectator noted: "I believe the King never heard a lecture in so free language against his idolised prerogative." But suddenly Pym faltered. Across the long, dark hall he caught sight of Strafford's face — the fierce eyes dimmed with the pain of physical suffering; the mop of hair, streaked prematurely with grey; the haughty expression, doubtful and puzzled as, conscious of his fidelity to his own vision, he listened incredulously to Pym's ascription of deliberate wickedness. The years rolled back. For one blinding second Pym saw Wentworth, his friend. He broke down and fumbled among his papers. "To humble the man," wrote the same spectator, "God let his memory fail him to a point or two."

Then, recovering himself, he returned to the charge. Somehow he must show Strafford the reality of the way he had chosen — the way of "Thorough," of mere reward and punishment



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which, the Earl had said, were the motives which moved men.

“Those that live so much under the whip and the pillory and such servile engines as were frequently used by the Earl of Strafford,” Pym said, “they may have the dregs of valour, sullenness and stubbornness, which may make them prone to mutinies and discontents. But those noble and gallant affections, which put men to brave designs and attempts for the preservation or enlargement of a kingdom, they are hardly capable of.” In one pregnant sentence he summed up the whole matter : “Shall it be treason to embase the King’s coin, though but a piece of twelve pence or six pence, and must it not needs be the effect of a greater treason to embase the spirits of his subjects and to set a stamp and character of servitude upon them ? ”

Next day Charles exasperated the Commons into once more abandoning the impeachment in favour of the Bill of Attainder. He demanded the disbanding of the Scottish Army and at the same time refused to disband the Irish. This, in view of recent revelations as to the purpose of the latter, resulted in a second reading of the Bill and a message to the Lords that, as the Commons were busily engaged on this new measure, they would not be present at the trial.

At this crisis, Hampden, who had remained in

the background, rose to remind the Commons of their duty : " Our counsel hath been heard ; *ergo*, in justice, we must hear his." The Bill, certainly, was under discussion, but " the bill now depending doth not tie us to go by bill." He suggested a course of action : " Our members appointed to manage the evidence might speak first to matter of law, and then retire from the bar to their places amongst us. The Earl of Strafford's counsel having spoken at the bar on the left side of the earl, our members might again come down to their former place, and answer them what they thought material to be answered." In the teeth of St. John's opposition he carried his motion, and next morning the Commons *once* again took their place at the impeachment, in the order he had prescribed for them.

But it was now clear that the Bill of Attainder could not be stopped. Hampden had never feared Strafford, and did not now, but the majority of the House, especially the new members, was too frightened to share his calm acquiescence in the slow and doubtful process of the law. The Bill was given its third reading by a majority of 204 to 59, in spite of protests that it amounted to judicial murder. Pym and Falkland voted for it ; Selden and Holborne against it ; but the names of Hyde and Hampden were found on neither side. At such a moment he could not openly oppose Pym.

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The passing of the Bill had, however, one advantage for Strafford. It could not become law without the King's assent, and now, to reassure the Earl on that point, Charles wrote to him : “ I cannot satisfy myself in honour or conscience without assuring you now, in the midst of your troubles, that, upon the word of a king, you shall not suffer in life, honour or fortune.” He then appointed Lord Saye Master of the Wards, hoping thereby to silence the Puritan opposition in the Lords – an attempt which was as unsuccessful as his endeavour to bribe Pym with the Chancellorship of the Exchequer. The time was past when anything would have availed to save Strafford, except a genuine proof that the King meant peace. When Essex, questioned on the matter, remarked : “ Stone dead hath no fellow,” he was expressing the feeling of the country. Twenty thousand Londoners alone signed a petition asking for the Earl's execution.

Charles chose this moment secretly to authorise one of his officers to seize the Tower as a preliminary to releasing Strafford, and publicly to violate Parliamentary privilege by interfering with the Bill of Attainder which was under discussion in the Lords.

The excitement in the City and in the Commons was at fever heat. Rumours that the King intended to subdue London with an army vied with those of

a vast Popish plot, and if the Lords were disposed to think that the Commons over-estimated the danger, they were soon to be disabused.

Outside Westminster, a crowd of 5000 Londoners, mostly shopkeepers and merchants, were calling for justice on Strafford. Inside St. Stephen's, as soon as prayers were over, there was an uneasy silence. The clerk's assistant rose to read a Bill concerning wiredrawers, whereon members broke into nervous laughter "that such a frivolous bill should be pitched upon, when all matters were in such apparent danger." After another interminable silence someone called for the order which had been recently made that members who arrived after eight o'clock should pay a shilling fine. Like children, those in their places shouted "Pay! Pay!" to late-comers, "which bred a great confusion." Then, as the morning wore on, Pym warned them of their danger. Rumour had told a half-truth. There was, indeed, an Army Plot, to which the King had given his approval. There was a plan, also, to land the French Army at Portsmouth, in which the Queen was implicated. And Strafford himself had offered the Keeper of the Tower a bribe of £22,000 and the marriage of his son to the Earl's daughter, if he would let him escape to the ship which was waiting for him in the Thames.

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It was decided that the ports must be closed immediately. Hampden was appointed to a secret committee to pursue investigations as to the extent of the plot, while Essex, Saye and Brooke were put in command of a guard at the Tower.

The Lords, shocked by the discovery of the royal actions, realised that the Commons' fears of violence were anything but imaginary. With Strafford free at the head of a combined French and Irish force, the outlook for liberty in England would be poor indeed. They passed the Bill of Attainder without further delay.

And, as the mob howled round Whitehall, Charles, who discovered that his public conscience released him from any private promise he might have made, signed Strafford's death-warrant. He then wrote to the Lords a letter begging for mercy for the Earl, embellished with the postscript : “If he must die, it were a charity to reprieve him till Saturday.” The recipients, in view of recent revelations, considered it safer to arrange the execution for Wednesday.

So, on May 12th, Thomas Wentworth, Earl of Strafford, was beheaded on Tower Hill, in the presence of 200,000 people. With that courage which never failed him, he marched to the scaffold “more like a general at the head of an army to breathe out victory than like a condemned man to

undergo death." Remembering the scenes at Laud's arrest, the Lieutenant of the Tower urged him to get into a coach. "No," replied Strafford, "I dare look Death in the face and I hope the people too. Have you a care I do not escape and I care not how I die, whether by the hand of the executioner or by the madness and fury of the people. If that may give them better content, it is all one to me."

To the end he misjudged men. The people, who would have torn to pieces the cruel, cowardly, meddling little ecclesiastic, had admiration in their hatred for the great leader. They were there to witness a ritual, not to enjoy a spectacle. They remained impassive, solemn, in profound silence. Not till the executioner, with a shout of "God save the King!" held up the severed head did the pent-up fear of months find release in a roar of thankfulness.

## XIV

### “WHO GOES HOME?”

**A** WEEK after Strafford's execution, Charles decided that, as soon as the treaty with the Scots was signed, it would be politic for him to visit his northern kingdom. He was, after all, a Scot (as his ineradicable accent indicated), and it was at least possible that his personal appearance in his native capital would inspire an outburst of royalism which would effectually destroy the Scottish alliance with the English Parliament. Montrose, leader of the Covenanters, had changed sides and was now prepared to support the King ; Montrose's hereditary enemy, Argyle, was administering Scotland in such a manner that other nobles protested – “ If this be what you call liberty, God send me the old slavery again ” : the Scottish leaders, finding the English trade policy unsatisfactory, were willing to turn to the King if he would offer them better terms than Pym. Conditions seemed propitious and, in any case, Edinburgh was, at the moment, more healthy than London.

The Queen, on her part, decided that her health

required that she should take the waters at Spa. As she also planned to take so much plate and jewels as would "not only impoverish the State, but might be employed to the promoting of some mischievous attempts to the disturbance of the public peace," the Commons appointed a committee, on which Hampden served, to consider the advisability of her journey. She postponed it.

The King, however, in spite of prayers and entreaties from his alarmed subjects, persisted in his determination to go north. He made certain concessions to Parliament—promised that, should any armed force be needed in the south, Essex should have command of it; appointed St. John Solicitor-General; but did not fulfil the prevalent belief in well-informed circles that Pym was again to be offered the Chancellorship of the Exchequer and Hampden given either the Secretaryship of State or the Chancellorship of the Duchy of Lancaster. Hampden's own wish was for the post of tutor to the Prince of Wales. He had given up hope of the King. Any constitutional arrangements would be wrecked on the shoals of Charles's character. It was true that he had authorised an Act prohibiting the dissolution of Parliament without its own consent, but, once he was in Scotland, free to intrigue with three armies, the letter of that law would avail little.



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When, in August, the Scottish treaty was at last signed, the Commons were so overcome with a sense of their danger that they held a special session on a Sunday to discuss measures to avert it. But their remonstrances were useless. Charles, having heard from the Scots that they “would do all in their power to place the King in his authority again,” warned the English that he “would make anyone repent who laid hands on his horse’s reins to stop him,” and so departed.

Parliament acted immediately. If Pym must remain in London, at least Hampden could go to Scotland. With Nathaniel Fiennes, Lord Saye’s second and favourite son, and four others, two Lords and two Commoners, he was empowered to proceed to Edinburgh to negotiate with the Scots concerning the ratification of the treaty. The authorisation for this step was an ordinance passed by both Houses – a proceeding which excited little immediate comment, but which was to influence the future. Parliament, for the first time, had acted independently of the Crown.

On August 30th, the six Commissioners arrived in Edinburgh, a fortnight after Charles, to whom they duly presented themselves at Holyrood. He refused to sanction their credentials or to allow them to discharge the business for which, ostensibly, they had been sent. They remained, nevertheless,

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in their unofficial and more important capacity – to keep in contact with the Scots, watch the King and report to the committees of each House which, during the recess, were still sitting in London.

Hampden, seeing his sovereign at closer quarters than had hitherto been possible for him, was confirmed in his distrust. He observed him endeavouring to conciliate the middle classes by his assiduous attendance at Presbyterian services, and to win over the nobility by favours distributed first to the one, then to the other faction. He saw the growth of unrest and suspicion, culminating in a plot, known as “The Incident,” in which the King was thought to have conspired with Montrose to contrive the murder of Argyle and Hamilton. No one then, or later, ever knew the truth of it, though it was improbable that either Charles or Montrose was guilty. Nevertheless the King, who had by his curious diplomacy lost the confidence of every party in turn, was now sufficiently disliked for the Scottish Parliament to refuse his tearful plea for an open investigation “that he might himself have justice done him by the refutation of the calumnies which had been laid upon him.”

Violent confusion reigned. Hampden and his fellow commissioners reported the matter “to our worthy friend, John Pym, Esq., and to the rest of the committees of the House of Commons there

present,” informing them that “things were lately in a hopeful way of accommodation, but on Monday night last information was given to the Marquis of Hamilton and the Earls of Argyle and Lanerick, of a design to seize their persons. They consequently removed into the city and the next day, by order of the Parliament, the ports were shut and the guards set, and the Marquis and the two others went to a house of his about twelve miles distant, where they remain. . . . Before this fell out, the treaty and what remained of the writers’ business seemed almost completed, but this affair has put a stop to everything, and may give rise to great troubles, so that they think it right to send information to prevent false reports, and will send a fuller account when more is known.”

This letter was read in the Commons on October 20th and communicated to the Lords at a conference the next day, and hardly had the excitement occasioned by it died down than it was eclipsed by news from Ireland. Strafford’s thoroughness had not been without results and now England reaped what he had sown. A Catholic rebellion broke out. About 5000 Protestants were murdered in such a manner that an uncomplicated death was a mercy ; 10,000 more were driven out into the wilds to die of cold and starvation. Rumour, before it reached Westminster, had quadrupled the total and added to

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reports of sickening cruelty, legends more ghastly still. Such a conclusion to a year of uneasy apprehension convinced Parliament that the Popish Plot had come at last. The City, not less alarmed, demanded the imprisonment of Catholic nobles, while the Commons, under Pym's guidance, passed a revolutionary proposal taking power to deal with Ireland into their own hands on the stated and specific ground that they could not trust the King's advisers.

At such a moment it seemed to Hampden that his place was at Pym's side. Having implored the King at Holyrood to return to Whitehall, and charged Fiennes and his colleagues to wait in Edinburgh until he did so, he set off alone down the North Road, riding post-haste to Westminster.

He arrived there to find the unanimity imposed on the Commons by the Irish danger imperilled by a bitter dispute on ecclesiastical policy. They were debating the Grand Remonstrance, a document which, in 204 paragraphs, summarised the misgovernment of the reign. Though as a narrative of events it was generally endorsed, a strong party, led by Hyde and Falkland, wished to omit, or at least to modify, those portions attacking the bishops "who cherish formality and superstition as the natural effects and more probable supports of their own ecclesiastical tyranny."

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The final and critical debate took place on November 22nd, and, having lasted for fourteen hours, culminated in a scene of unparalleled excitement in the dim, candle-lit chamber at two o'clock on the following morning. With tempers at breaking-point, nerves frayed past endurance, the tired and hungry members were on the point of bloodshed. It was recorded by one of them that many “took their swords in their scabbards out of their belts and held them by their pommels in their hands, setting the lower part in the ground.” Another noted : “I thought we had all sat in the valley of the shadow of death ; for we, like Joab’s and Abner’s young men, had caught at each other’s locks and sheathed our swords in each other’s bowels had not the sagacity and great calmness of Mr. Hampden, by a short speech, prevented it.”

Five hours before – at nine o'clock – Hampden had concluded his main speech on behalf of the Remonstrance which he described as “wholly true in substance and a very necessary vindication of the parliament.” In the course of it he replied to his cousin Edmund Waller’s epigrammatic flippancies in referring to the matter in hand as not a Remonstrance but a Premonstrance and enquiring how Parliament had the right to question the King’s choice of counsellors. “What,” asked Hampden, “is the objection to this declaration? When this

House discovers ill counsels, may it not say there are evil counsellors and complain of them? When any man is accused, may he not say he has done his endeavour? And we say no more in this." The party opposed to members of the House was prevalent, and it was therefore necessary for them to state openly that they had given their best advice.

Then, on the ecclesiastical side, he enlarged on a metaphor used by a previous speaker who had defended episcopacy on the severely practical ground that, without the possibility of promotion to a bishopric, few men would be inclined to take Orders: "Great rewards do beget great endeavours, and certainly, when the great Basin and Ewer are taken out of the lottery, you shall have few adventurers for the small plate and spoons only. If any man could cut the moon out into little stars, we might still have the same moon, or as much in small pieces, yet we should want both light and influence."

It was Strafford's theory of material reward and punishment again - an expression of that spirit which, in its denial of idealism, was so intolerable to Hampden. He took the illustration and applied it in his own way. What authority was there for supposing that the stars were of less value to God than the moon - the clergy less useful to the Church

than the bishops? And, quoting from the Book of Revelation, he reminded the House of the vision of the perfect Church, the Bride of Christ, who, clothed with the sun, should have the moon for a footstool, but the stars for a crown about her head,

At that point he withdrew from the debate, listening as the tide of it rolled ever more angrily, past Pym's unequivocal: “The honour of the King lies in the safety of the people, and we must tell the truth: the plots have been very near the King, all driven home to the Court and the Popish party,” to the final division, taken at midnight. Arthur Goodwin was one of the tellers for the “Ayes,” who had it by eleven votes only.

Immediately one of the more extreme Puritans moved that the Remonstrance should be printed. His haste rather than his purpose was at fault. Certainly the document was intended for the nation, but the conclusion of such a debate was hardly the time to decide it. To avert this decision, Hyde rose to move that a protestation against the Remonstrance should be entered on behalf of the minority. He was told that, without the consent of the House, such action was impossible. Nevertheless one of his adherents, Geoffrey Palmer, pressed the subject, demanding the recording of such a protest “in the name of himself and all the rest.”

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It was then that pandemonium broke out. Shouts of "All ! All !" in emphasis from the minority, in derision from the majority, came from every side. Men threw their hats in the air and clambered over the benches on to the floor of the House, ready to fight as they had voted.

Hampden rose, his voice cold now and incisive, to ask Palmer how he could know other men's minds. Then, having diverted the House's attention from the general possibility of a protest to the particular exaggeration of Palmer, he persuaded it to postpone further discussion till a much-needed rest had restored a truer perspective. Once more his authority triumphed. At four in the morning, the Commons poured out into the cold November air, having at last, without let or hindrance, completed the Remonstrance originally demanded by Eliot so many years ago and so many times laid aside.

It was something that Hampden had averted bloodshed ; it was more that the Remonstrance had been carried. Cromwell, passing Falkland on the way out, remarked : " If the Remonstrance had been rejected, I would have sold all I had to-morrow morning and never seen England any more ; and I know there are many other honest men of the same resolution."

Yet the Remonstrance, the final epitome of constitutional effort, was also a challenge. Charles



returned to London next day, and from that moment both he and his opponents realised, as Hampden had realised for years, that the dispute must end in trial by battle. Yet neither side wished to be the first to appeal directly to arms. Charles hoped by foreign aid to intimidate the country, and by arresting and executing their leaders to break the Commons. The Commons struggled to protect themselves by gaining the right to arm the people of England if necessity arose. Thus began the manœuvrings for position, during which both King and Commons remained as far as they could within the letter of irrelevant and outworn laws.

The Commons' weakness lay in the fact that, without the co-operation of the Lords, they could not act constitutionally and the Lords continually under-estimated the danger in which they stood. Yet the proved responsibility of Charles for the Army Plots and the unproved (and possibly unfounded) assertion by a leader of the Irish troubles that he had acted under Charles's orders, were, in the opinion of the Commons, sufficient indications of their peril. The Commons' strength lay in the support of Londoners, whose indignation had grown steadily from the days when they resented Gondomar and Buckingham to those when they feared Strafford and hated Laud. They were now further alarmed by the Irish situation and, by continual

protests and spasmodic riots, made their attitude plain to the Court.

Two days after the Remonstrance, Hampden, endeavouring to unravel the extent of Charles's intrigues, informed the House that in Aylesbury gaol was a Catholic, Adam Courtney, who was suspected of connivance in the plot of the King's officers to bring up the Army to overawe Parliament. Producing the torn fragments of letters which Courtney, on his arrest, had attempted to destroy, he asked that the committee on Army affairs should endeavour to decipher them, and that Courtney himself should be brought up from Buckinghamshire to be examined.

But measures of safety were more vital than proofs of danger. That Charles intended violence there could now be no doubt. He had taken away the guard which under Essex's command ensured the safety of the Houses, had dismissed the trusted Keeper of the Tower and replaced him by an unscrupulous debauchee, and gathered round himself at Whitehall a crowd of insolent desperadoes who asked nothing better than to fall on the "roundheaded" Londoners. As a counter, the Commons asked the City to provide its trained bands for their defence should occasion arise. In such an atmosphere all normal activities were dislocated. Bishops and Catholics were hooted in the streets.

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Westminster Abbey was in a state of siege. Trade was at a standstill, since, for fear of the “Cavaliers” – as the King’s bodyguard was called – the citizens had continually to close their shops. One observer noted : “A civil war must ensue, which every day we see approaches nearer.”

With the shadow of this great division over them, Falkland openly and Hyde secretly took service with the King, and for the last time, on New Year’s Day, 1642, Charles endeavoured to bribe Pym with office. When Pym once more refused, he determined to destroy him. But he must act at once. There were rumours that the Commons intended to impeach the Queen as the chief instigator of attempts to crush the English by force. Considering that she had been, through her favourites, the main inspiration of the Army Plots ; through her confessors and ambassadors had been deeply involved with the Pope and the Irish Catholics ; through her brother had sought help from France and through her daughter was endeavouring to gain aid from the Dutch, it would be impolitic to let such an accusation proceed. And the only safe way to prevent it was to bring a counter-charge against the leaders of the Commons.

Accordingly, on January 2nd, the King instructed the Attorney-General to draw up an impeachment, on the charge of treason, against Hampden, Pym,

Holles, Hesilrige and Strode, and to demand an examination of the evidence by a secret committee of the Lords, from which Essex, Warwick, Brooke, Saye and Mandeville were to be excluded. On second thoughts, Mandeville's name was taken from the list and added to those to be proceeded against.

Next day, before the Lords, Hampden and the others were accused of having "traitorously endeavoured to subvert the fundamental laws and government of the kingdom of England"; of having "traitorously endeavoured, by many foul aspersions upon his Majesty and his government to alienate the affections of his people"; of having "endeavoured to draw his Majesty's late army to disobedience"; of having "traitorously invited and encouraged a foreign power to invade his Majesty's kingdom"; of having "traitorously endeavoured to subvert the rights and very being of Parliaments"; of having "endeavoured (as far as in them lay) by force and terror to compel the Parliament to join with them in their traitorous designs," and of "having traitorously conspired to levy – and actually have levied – war against the King."

At the same time the King assured the Commons that "we do engage unto you solemnly the word of a King that the security of all and every one of you

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from violence is, and ever shall be, as much our care as the preservation of us and our children,” ordered the studies and trunks of the five commoners to be sealed up and sent the Serjeant-at-Arms to arrest their persons.

The Lords, annoyed at the illegality of Charles’s proceedings, insisted that the sealed studies should be broken open and, at last realising their danger, joined with the Commons in demanding a guard about the House sufficiently strong to ensure them against violence. The Commons refused to surrender the members, but ordered them to attend the House to answer any legal charge which might be preferred against them.

Charles, who knew well enough that none of the charges could be sustained in a judicial enquiry, decided to take matters into his own hands. He would march on the House with his armed Cavaliers and imprison the members by force – “pull the rogues out by the ears,” as the Queen phrased it. During the lunch adjournment on the 4th, news of his intention reached the House, but, in spite of Essex’s warning to them that the only safe course lay in flight, the five were in their places again at one o’clock to hear the Lords’ decision on the impeachment. The Upper House joined the Lower in voting it “a scandalous paper.”

At three o’clock, Charles set out from Whitehall

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accompanied by four hundred armed bravoos, led by Captain David Hide, an outstanding Cavalier—a man of unbridled temper, as revengeful as he was hasty ; a deep drinker, who, in his cups, would use indiscriminately the first weapon to hand, and in his rare intervals of sobriety was unashamed of his intoxicated frolics ; who quarrelled publicly with his wife because she declined “ to pledge him in as many beer-glasses of wine as he thought fit she should drink,” and flouted the authority of his superior officers. It was he, so they said, who coined the epithet “roundhead.” It was he, certainly, who was the presiding genius of the King’s guard at Whitehall.

The Commons, hearing of the approaching band, implored the five members to take refuge in the City as the only means not only of ensuring their own safety but of averting bloodshed in the House. And so, by the time that Charles was at the door of St. Stephen’s, through which, by the first and fundamental privilege of the Commons, no English monarch had ever stepped, Hampden, Pym, Hesilrige, Holles and Strode were being rowed down the Thames to the security of the City.

The King entered the House. Hide leant on the door to keep it open, so that the Commons might both see and hear the armed men outside. They held their swords and pistols ready. One called

out : “ I am a good marksman ; I can hit right, I warrant you ! ” Others replied, equally loudly : “ A pox take the House of Commons. Let them come and be hanged. What ado is here with the House of Commons ? ”

The House, thus anticipating a massacre, was not unduly impressed by Charles’s statement that “ no king that ever was in England shall be more careful of your privileges to maintain them to the uttermost of his power than I shall be.” Glancing round, he realised that the members were not in their places. “ I must have them wheresoever I find them. Where are they ? ” he asked the Speaker, William Lenthall.

Lenthall, Hampden’s school-fellow at Thame, fell on his knees and answered : “ May it please your Majesty, I have neither eyes to see nor tongue to speak in this place but as this House is pleased to direct me, whose servant I am here ; and I humbly beg your Majesty’s pardon that I cannot give any other answer than this to what your Majesty is pleased to demand of me.”

“ Well,” replied Charles, “ I see the birds are flown. I do expect that you shall send them unto me as soon as they return hither. If not, I will seek them myself, for their treason is foul.” Then, conscious of a certain hostility in the atmosphere, he added : “ I assure you, on the word of a King,

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I never did intend any force, but shall proceed against them in a legal and fair way, for I never meant any other."

That assurance "on the word of a King," so often and so proudly on Charles's lips, was becoming wearisome. He left the House to the accompaniment of shouts of "Privilege! Privilege!"

Nor was he more successful next day in his attempt to induce the City to surrender the members, who had taken refuge in a house in Coleman Street. Again the cry "Privileges of Parliament" assailed his ears, and he was forced to return empty-handed to Whitehall to issue a proclamation to his "loving subjects," asking them to make the arrest. But the "loving subjects" preferred the "traitors." The Lords, the Commons, the City authorities, the City companies, the citizens, the apprentices, even the seamen and mariners were on their side. And not London alone, but, as the news spread, the country declared for them.

When, on Monday, January 10th, Charles fled from Whitehall and the threatened members returned to Parliament (which, for safety, was sitting as a committee in the Grocers' Hall), Hampden broke the silence with a short speech of thanks to the Commons on behalf of his friends and himself. He also announced that several thousand of his constituents were on their way to London with two



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petitions, one “to declare their readiness to live and die with the parliament and in the defence of the rights of the House of Commons,” and another for the King. Hampden asked the House’s leave that, as they were coming in a peaceable manner, they might be given permission to approach. That permission, in spite of Hyde’s opposition, was granted, and next day, as the people of London sang in the streets :

“ *And for this sea of liberty  
Wherein we yet do swim,  
Gramercy Kimbolton<sup>1</sup> and Strode, say I  
Hesilrige, Holles, Hampden, Pym,*”

while, on the Thames, gaily decorated boats took the members back in triumph to Westminster, four thousand freeholders and gentlemen of Buckinghamshire marched along the frost-bound roads of England to inform the King that “having by virtue of your Highness’s writ, chosen John Hampden Knight of our shire, in whose loyalty we, his countrymen and neighbours, have ever had good cause to confide ; of late we, to our no less amazement than grief, find him accused of treason.”

Someone, they felt, had made a mistake.

<sup>1</sup> Mandeville was Lord Kimbolton in his own right.

## XV

### WAR

**A**FTER the impeachment, Hyde noticed that Hampden "was much altered, his nature and carriage seeming much fiercer than it did before." Even his courtesy was strained. He spoke "very snappishly" to Hyde, informing him that recent events had been attended by at least one benefit—that he now knew who were his friends. "And so departed, without staying for an answer."

He no longer suffered fools gladly. When a noble lord, hearing a speech by Oliver Cromwell, enquired blandly: "Pray, Mr. Hampden, who is that sloven?" Hampden retorted: "That sloven whom you see before you hath no ornament in his speech; but that sloven, I say, if we should ever come to a breach with the King (which God forbid!), in such a case, I say, that sloven will be the greatest man in England."

He was distracted by increasing divisions among members, no longer knowing whom to trust. He was impatient that, even among his followers, there were many who still could not see the necessity for

strong measures. The attempted arrest was the King's declaration of war, not, as the timid and the undecided tried to persuade themselves, an isolated aberration. And in war, as Hampden saw it, there was only one course of action – to fight to win. Patience, persuasion, diplomacy, were useful assets still, but useful only when subordinated to the main purpose. To pretend that peace was possible, even to desire a peace other than that which came from victory, was foolishness in the stupid and treachery in the intelligent. For seventeen years Charles had had every chance to rule England for England's good; for seventeen years he had made it abundantly clear that, disregarding the people, he intended to rule it for his own pleasure. In the process, though he had proved that he was prepared to go to any lengths against liberty, the Commons had shown genuine anxiety to lay the responsibility for it on his ministers alone. Buckingham and Finch and Strafford and Laud had paid his accounts for him. But now at last the polite and comfortable fiction that he had “been misled by evil counsellors” had been shattered by his own action at Westminster. And to Hampden the issue was plain: “*Vestigia nulla retrorsum.*” Or, as Hyde put it: “Without question, when first he drew his sword, he threw away the scabbard.”

For the remaining eighteen months of his life,

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John's time, in Parliament or in the field, was sufficiently full. There was little enough home life, although he had married again—Lady Lettice Vachell, a young widow, whose father and brother, the two Sir Francis Knollys, were members of Parliament for Reading. But Lettice never went to Hampden House; that was Elizabeth's. When she was not with him in London, she remained in the Vachell house at Coley, on the outskirts of Reading. They had no children.

Through the winter and early spring of 1642, Hampden was needed at Westminster. The situation was dangerous. Within a week of the King's flight from London, Parliament received a message from the Lord Mayor of Hull that the Earl of Newcastle had, in the King's name, demanded admittance to the city to gain control of its magazine. He had been refused. Charles, realising that he was not yet in a position to strike, sent a conciliatory message to Parliament. It did not deceive Hampden, who proposed that, as a guarantee of good faith, the King should be asked "to put the Tower of London, and other parts of the Kingdom, with the militia thereof, into such hands as they might confide in, so that they might sit in safety."

Though he carried this proposal in the Commons, the Lords vetoed it by a larger majority than usual. The Commons, therefore, forwarded the request

on their own initiative. Charles's inevitable refusal convinced the Lords that Hampden was right and they united with the Commons to pass a Militia Ordinance by which all counties were "to put themselves in a posture of defence" under Lord-Lieutenants and deputy-lieutenants approved by Parliament. The King, asked to sanction the Ordinance, replied "By God ! Not for an hour !" Nevertheless, it was proceeded with. Hampden was nominated deputy-lieutenant for Buckinghamshire. The Lord-Lieutenant was Lord Paget, he of the "long lean face, not differing in length from that of an ass." (Once, informing the Queen of the strength of his party, he had remarked : "Madam, we are as strong as Samson." "My lord," she had replied, "I easily believe it, seeing you want not among you the jawbone of an ass." Thereafter at Court he was known familiarly as "Samson.")

Hampden and Goodwin, as soon as the Militia Ordinance was decided on, wrote to the High Sheriff of Buckinghamshire, enclosing a copy of it. They insisted on loyalty to Paget's wishes, even to having as his helper Sir Walter Pye, if he would accept the post. But Sir Walter, as it happened, preferred to recruit for the King.

The King, meanwhile, turned his attention once more to Hull, which was now defended in the

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Parliamentary interest by Sir John Hotham. He wished to carry into effect the Queen's plan. She had just left England with the Crown jewels, and hoped, by pledging them, to raise for her husband 30,000 or 40,000 Danish troops, who were to be landed at Hull. "Hull must absolutely be had," she wrote to Charles. "If you cannot, you must go to Newcastle, and if you find that is not safe, go to Berwick, for it is necessary to have a seaport."

Charles accordingly went to York to see for himself how the land lay. Ascribing to the Commons an ingenuous trustfulness which they lacked, he announced his intention of visiting Ireland, for which journey he would need 2000 foot and 200 horse. Arms for them, he pointed out, could be provided from the magazine at Hull. Parliament, receiving the message, asked him to postpone his visit and made arrangements for the removal of the magazine. Charles replied by advancing to Hull with a force of 700 horse and demanding admission to the city. Hotham refused him, and he had to ride away discomfited while the Navy, under the command of Warwick, sailed up the coast and conveyed the coveted munitions to the Tower of London. The King proclaimed Hotham a traitor.

During these happenings, Hampden had ridden into Buckinghamshire to see how the raising of men and money was proceeding. In addition to the

need for funds for Parliamentary defence at home, there was now an appeal to finance the pacification of Ireland. As the City found it impossible to guarantee a loan in times of such uncertainty, Parliament, with the King's approval, had adopted a plan which would not only provide payment for men to quell the present discontents, but would also be a safeguard against their recurrence. Two and a half million acres of Irish land, liable to confiscation on account of the rebellion of its owners, were to be allotted to English subscribers. Thus £1,000,000 would be raised without difficulty and, at the same time, the gentlemen of England would be given a practical interest in the state and government of the country.

Hampden subscribed £1000, Goodwin £1800, Pym £600, Cromwell £500. When one member offered, without the expectation of any land, to contribute £50 a year as long as the Irish war lasted, Hampden moved that the offer and the House's acceptance of it as a great public service should be put on record in the Journals. And his recommendation of the loan to his county resulted in the raising of £6000 from Buckinghamshire. From Hampden House he wrote again to the High Sheriff, reminding him that "if any about you be willing to subscribe to the Irish propositions, they have till the 20th of this instant April."

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He was in his place again at Westminster when news of the events at Hull reached the Commons, and was appointed to conduct a conference with the Lords on the subject of Hotham's action, so that a united answer might be returned to the King. He had little difficulty in persuading the Upper House to concur in the vote that "Sir John Hotham had done nothing but in obedience to the commands of both Houses ; that the declaring of him a traitor, he being a member of the House of Commons, was a high breach of privilege of Parliament ; and that the doing so without due process of law was against the liberty of the subject and the law of the land."

It was now clear that, for safety's sake, the Militia Ordinance must be generally enforced, whether the King gave his consent or not. Many of the Lords and some of the Commons, including Hyde and Falkland, were making their way to the King at York. The men of the North were gathering round him : 40,000 of them had assembled on Heyworth Moor to see him and to listen to his appeal, though, to be sure, the demonstration lacked solidarity. "The House received yesterday," wrote Hampden to Hotham, "the information of the great meeting at York, upon which no conclusion can be made, since nothing was required of the people, nor anything declared by them."



More to the point, however, was the King's answer to the Militia Ordinance by appointing a Commission of Array to raise the counties for him. Parliament replied by claiming that "the King's supreme and royal pleasure is exercised and declared in this high court of law and counsel after a more eminent and obligatory manner than it can be by personal act or resolution of his own." It was the formal enunciation of the principle of the sovereignty of parliament.

In practice the situation resolved itself into a struggle between the Parliamentary Lieutenants appointed by the Militia Ordinance and the King's Commissioners of Array as to which side could raise most men in the shortest time, pending the declaration of open war. On June 14th, Hampden had to report to the House that, as far as Buckinghamshire was concerned, the Lord-Lieutenant had gone over to Charles. As a general muster was fixed for the following Friday, he asked either that a new Lord-Lieutenant might be named or that the deputy-lieutenants might have an order from both Houses to proceed with it. "We all wondered," recorded a diarist, "at the Lord Paget's mean and unworthy spirit to go to York to the King, having already mustered the county. Mr. Hampden and others were appointed to draw up an order."

Accordingly, that Friday, Hampden went to

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Aylesbury, where the thirty-two lieutenants of the county were assembled, to read the Ordinance charging them to collect the money of the county and to place it in the hands of a treasurer, to levy and train the militia, to provide a garrison for Aylesbury, where much powder was stored, and to make themselves responsible as a committee for the management of affairs: "This committee shall, either by themselves or by such person as they or any five or more of them shall appoint, view and muster at least once every month, and oftener if they think it expedient, all the soldiers belonging to the garrison of Aylesbury, which are to be paid out of the county of Buckinghamshire, and out of the money allowed out of any other counties for the maintenance of the guard and garrison; and they are to take especial care that the said soldiers be duly paid. All and sundry the officers and soldiers belonging to the garrison at Aylesbury shall be aiding and assisting to the said committee, to compel obedience, if need require, to the orders and commands of Parliament." And Lord Wharton, Arthur Goodwin's son-in-law, was appointed Lord-Lieutenant in "Samson's" place.

When he returned to London, Hampden found two letters waiting for him from Hotham, outlining events in the north. Before leaving London, he had written to him, "our Lord-Lieutenant went

away on Saturday night last ; but there be, God be thanked, those noble Lords that will live and die in doing their duty to the utmost. The towns, also, are more entire than ever. More of them than I could have imagined have declared themselves to assist in the last propositions, which I am sure you have seen. The City, likewise, continues full of affection for the Parliament ; they lent £100,000 very lately and when these propositions of horse and plate were made to them in a great assembly at Guild Hall, there were large testimonies of approbation.” Now, on his return, he continued his narrative : “ I went from this town into Buckinghamshire on Monday morning last, where I have been till now, about the militia of the county. During this absence I find you have been pleased to favour me with two of your letters, which my brother Pym read when I was away, and the latter of them he imparted to the House, as it was necessary he should, and is even now returning you the sense of the House in answer to it.

“ I see God hath showed Himself wonderful in his deliverance of you from treachery, and He that hath done it will still deliver.

“ I know not what hath passed the House in my absence, having been here but about an hour, but I may tell you they seem confident and secure above what I could expect, considering how great a

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noise the withdrawing of those Lords made in the country. The Deputy Lieutenants of the County and the soldiers have performed their parts very well, and besides our trained bands we have many volunteers that have armed themselves at their own charge and formed themselves into bands.

“I have no more to write of at the present, being such a stranger here.”

Hampden's haste to assure Hotham that all was going well was not unwarranted. Hull provided matter for anxiety. On July 4th, Hampden was appointed to a “Committee of Safety,” hastily formed “to take into consideration whatsoever may concern the safety of the Kingdom, the defence of Parliament and the prevention of the peace of the Kingdom, and opposing any force that may be raised against Parliament.” Its first act was to report that, since the King was now besieging Hull with a considerable force, there could no doubt as to whether he intended to make war or not. And in these circumstances it was long and dangerous to rely on the county militia, and therefore that the committee had resolved to raise an army of their own. This was made

parliament and to prevent a civil war." It was a vain hope. Hampden, appointed a colonel, went back to Buckinghamshire to raise a regiment of 1000 foot.

He mustered his men on Chalgrove Field, under Sir Richard Ingoldsby, appointed his second-in-command. From the farms and hamlets, from the villages and towns, they came to put themselves under his leadership – some led by their clergymen, Bible in hand ; some carrying bill-hooks and cross-bows, family heirlooms from the days of the Wars of the Roses ; some with clubs and staves ; men of peace, impelled to fight for a free conscience ; rogues and vagabonds, overjoyed at the possibility of plunder ; gentlemen and beggars. And through the parched summer days he drilled them, provided them with uniforms of that green which once had marked the mediæval retainers of Hampden, and gave them for a standard his own crest : “ *Vestigia nulla retrorsum.*” His eldest son, John, he made a captain. Soon the “ Buckinghamshire Greencoats,” as this, the 20th, regiment was called, was one of the best in the Army. And as he raised the infantry of the county, Goodwin raised the cavalry, so that on the field John and Arthur were inseparable still.

Hampden, as a soldier, remained a great leader of men. But he was no military tactician, and when

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enquirers applied to him for advice on points of organisation and strategy, his invariable answer was : " Refer that to the soldiers, as they understand it." The modesty which had marked the beginning of his political career at twenty-seven was in no way diminished as now, at forty-eight, he embarked on a military one. To it, as much as to his instinct of loyalty, was due his unquestioning obedience to Essex, even when most he chafed under the Fabian tactics of the commander. Hampden, left to himself, acted rapidly ; his decisions were undelayed. As the war proceeded he gave Essex advice which, had it been followed, would have resulted in the immediate victory of Parliament. When Essex refused it, though others loudly complained and asked that Hampden should replace him, Hampden himself made no protest. He was a man under authority.

His first action, however, was taken on his own initiative. As he and Goodwin were inspecting the troops at Aylesbury, news was brought that the Earl of Berkshire with a party of soldiers and gentlemen were assembling at Watlington to put into execution the King's Commission of Array. Taking with him about a hundred of Goodwin's horse and four hundred of his own foot, Hampden set off to surround them. Hearing of his approach, they fled. Hampden, with the cavalry, gave chase

and overtook them at Ascott, where they had taken refuge with Sir Robert Dormer. The arrest was swift. A contemporary, writing on August 19th, three days after the event, reported it with commendable terseness : “ Mr. Hampden, without much ceremony, entered the house and apprehended the Earl, who affirmed he was innocent and had done nothing ; to whom Mr. Hampden replied ‘ he was therefore sent to prevent him.’ ” The Earl and his helpers travelled to London as prisoners.

At York, having abandoned the attempt on Hull (which, for a moment, Hotham contemplated surrendering), the King decided that the Royal Standard must be set up as a rallying-point for loyal men against traitors. York itself, however, he considered too far from London, and he therefore marched south to Coventry, which he hoped would admit him. The citizens of Coventry, while quite willing that he should enter alone, refused to entertain his army and prepared for a siege.

Hampden and Goodwin, with their “ Greencoats,” thereupon set out for Coventry, joining forces with Lord Saye’s “ Bluecoats ” from Oxfordshire (the 9th), Holles’s London “ Redcoats ” (the 13th) and Brooke’s Warwickshire “ Purplecoats ” (the 6th) to relieve the town. Outside the city, at Southam, they engaged and routed the Royalists, Hampden opening the skirmish with an infantry

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charge. It was his first engagement, and it proved that to a moral courage, which was unquestioned, he added a physical courage in the face of danger. That trait was, for his soldiers, their most cherished memory of him. One of his officers, in an elegiac verse, bore witness :

*I have seen*

*Him in the front of's Regiment-in-Green,  
When Death about him did in ambush lie  
And whizzing shot, like showers of arrows, fly,  
Waving his conqu'ring steel, as if that he  
From Mars had got the sole monopoly  
Of never-failing courage.*

The King, who was watching the engagement, left his troops and rode back to Nottingham where, in the afternoon, he set up the Royal Standard as a signal that war had begun.

The standard was entrusted to the care of Hampden's Buckinghamshire friend and neighbour, Sir Edmund Verney, noblest of all Charles's supporters. "I do not like the quarrel," he had said to Hyde, "and do heartily wish that the King would yield and consent to what they desire. My conscience is only concerned in honour and in gratitude to follow my master. I have eaten his bread and served him near thirty years, and will not do so base a thing as forsake him, and choose rather to lose my life -



which I am sure to do – to preserve and defend those things which are against my conscience to preserve and defend. For I will deal freely with you – I have no reverence for bishops, for whom this quarrel subsists.”

Verney was fortunate that he could, when the ultimate division came, put personal loyalty above religious convictions. Hampden could not. For him it had become “ God or the King.”

*For if Religion had not been the ground  
Of this great quarrel his sheath'd sword had found  
No way to opposition.*

And if, in his mind, he still distinguished the man Charles Stuart from the King of England, the person from the office – as the Parliamentary declaration had done – the distinction was subtle enough to invite the charge of casuistry. Yet, in truth, the matter was too involved for Straffordian simplicity. Treason was a sin ; to Verney, the greatest ; to Hampden, only less than treachery to conscience. To express so great an emotional conflict by a legal fiction was, no doubt, inadequate ; yet it was inevitable.

Against his heart, Hampden wore a silver heart, with a red cornelian at the centre of it. The filigree work from which it depended was shaped to a pattern resembling the initials of his own bold

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signature, and on the jewel's rim was engraved the distich :

*Against my King I never fight .  
But for my King and Country's right.*

Those who saw subtlety in his least action noticed that the meaning varied with the interpretation of the word "but."

Hampden and Verney were at least true to an ideal, though it differed for each. So much could not be said for the majority of the Cavaliers. "Never any good undertaking," wrote a staunch Royalist, "had so many unworthy attendants, such horrid blasphemers, and wicked wretches as ours hath had. A day may come when the world may see that we who adhere to the King for conscience sake (whatever is said of us to the contrary) have as truly hated the profaneness and vileness of our own men as we have done the disloyalty and rebellion of the enemy." Wilmot, the most notable debauchee in England ; Goring who "would without hesitation have broken any trust or done any act of treachery to have satisfied an ordinary passion or appetite" ; Hide, the drunken desperado – these were Charles's men, who disliked Verney and Falkland and Astley (who rode to battle with a prayer on his lips) only less than they hated Hampden and Cromwell and Brooke.

There was one who stood apart from both sections – Prince Rupert, Charles's nephew, son of the Elector Palatine and Princess Elizabeth. Twenty-three years old, gay and daring, fighting and riding because he loved it, "rough and passionate," too young to realise what older men might do for conscience and too stupid to understand a constitutional principle, trained in the grim continental school of war, caring nothing for England or Englishmen, he introduced into the hostilities where brother fought brother a note of intentional cruelty and unnecessary plunder which, but for him, was lacking. He became known as "Prince Robber."

It was not the Royal Standard alone, however, which attracted those followers who disgrace any cause. Hampden, in command of the Parliamentary troops mustering at Northampton, as a base for operations against the King at Nottingham, found it almost impossible to preserve discipline in the absence of martial law and adequate pay. He and his brother officers wrote to Essex in London :

The soldiers are grown so outrageous that they plunder every place. Even this morning, five or six gentlemen's houses have been ransacked by them, of which we conceive one great cause to be the malignity of the country people who instigate and direct the soldiers in what places they should exercise this insolency.

We use all means possible to suppress it, sending out

squadrons of horse, who do their duty very well. But the truth is that, unless we are able to execute some exemplary punishment upon the principal malefactors, we have no hope to redress this horrid enormity.

We beseech your Excellency to take this into your present and serious consideration, for if this go on awhile the army will grow as odious to the country as the Cavaliers. And, though we take not upon us to advise the Parliament, yet we that are eye-witnesses of that state of the Army do verily believe that without Martial Law (to extend to the soldiers only) it may prove a ruin as likely as a remedy to this kingdom.

My Lord, we dispatched an express on Saturday to give notice that we had stayed my Lord of Newport here, who alleged that he was employed with my Lord Falkland and my Lord Spencer to carry his Majesty's message to Parliament; but, finding no testimony of this more than his own word, we held it fit to stay him here until the pleasure of the Houses were known. My Lord thinks the time long that he is stayed here, but that is no warrant for us to discharge him. Tomorrow my Lord Montague and divers other prisoners are upon their way for London.

My Lord, once more let us beseech your Lordship to put those unruly upon present action, which, being commanded by your Excellency, shall with all obedience be performed by your Excellency's humble servants.

Parliament, not trusting Charles, refused the overture for peace which he had sent by Falkland and Spencer, secretly assenting to "a thorough reformation of religion," and Essex himself prepared

to journey to Northampton to take personal command of the troops. He was needed. Next day, Hampden dispatched Hesilrige with another letter :

We are so perplexed with the insolencies of the soldiers already committed, and of which the apprehension is greater if they be not prevented forthwith, that we thought it absolutely necessary to desire Sir Arthur Hesilrige to take this journey that he might inform your Excellency of the particulars which are fitter to be related by a friend than to be read by an enemy, as they may be if they should be committed to paper.

He will likewise acquaint your Excellency with the importunate desires of the soldiers to have an increase of allowance, which they do not only pretend to as reasonable in regard to the great prices they are forced to pay for all their victual, but they challenge it also as just, upon the ground of a promise made unto them by the Committee of London that they should have 5*d.* every month besides their ordinary pay – which divers of the soldiers do confidently affirm, and the truth is we do not see how they can possibly live without some such addition as they desire.

My Lord, the officers are very desirous to know your pleasure about the waggon money ; for here they could provide themselves well of waggons and cannot hereafter when they are marched from home. And to provide carriages in the manner now we do is both an excessive charge and will fail us when we shall stand in need.

My Lord, we have no more, but to desire your Excellency's hastening to us, which we hoped would be a means to appease these disorders and would be a great

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satisfaction to the longing desires of your Excellency's most humble servants.

Essex, pipe in one hand, hat in the other, bowed a silent farewell to the Commons and, taking with him his coffin and winding sheet, as symbols of a loyalty which he did not express in words, set out next day for Northampton, where 20,000 men awaited him.

His intention was to march on Nottingham and capture the King in his own quarters, an exploit which, in view of the disparity in numbers, would have been as easy as it would have been effective. Charles, accordingly, left Nottingham and hurried westward in the hope of finding reinforcements on the Welsh border. Essex marched parallel with him to Worcester, which, he heard, Rupert had been sent to defend. As the town obviously could not resist so superior a force, it was evacuated, but the Prince fell on the advance cavalry of the Parliamentarians, and, by one of his devastating charges, drove them in headlong confusion for a nine-mile flight. Both sides realised that, however inferior Charles's infantry might be, the Parliamentary cavalry, unaccustomed for the most part to horseback, were no match for the Royalist gentleman-riders. And the conditions of warfare made superiority in cavalry an essential for victory.

Cromwell spoke gloomily of the matter to Hampden. Years afterwards, when he was the uncrowned King of England, he recounted the conversation :

“ I had a very worthy friend then ; and he was a very noble person, and I know his memory is very grateful to all – Mr. John Hampden. At my first going out into this engagement, I saw our men were beaten at every hand. I did indeed ; and desired him that he would make some additions to my Lord Essex’s army, of some new regiments. ‘ Your troops,’ said I, ‘ are most of them old decayed serving-men and tapsters and such kind of fellows ; and,’ said I, ‘ their troops are gentlemen’s sons, younger sons and persons of quality ; do you think that the spirits of such base and mean fellows will ever be able to encounter gentlemen, that have honour and courage and resolution in them ? You must get men of a spirit : and take it not ill what I say – I know you will not – of a spirit that is likely to go on as far as gentlemen will go : – or else you will be beaten still.’ I told him so ; I did truly. He was a wise and worthy person ; and he did think that I talked a good notion, but an impracticable one.”

Yet if this, at the moment, was impracticable, the reinforcements which were pouring into Charles at Shrewsbury made it necessary to raise new levies of some sort for the defence of London itself. At any

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moment the King might march on the capital, and when at last Essex heard that the royal army was moving southward, he set out hurriedly from Worcester to intercept it, leaving Hampden, with three thousand men, to follow with the artillery.

He came up with the King at Edgehill, and, on Sunday, October 23rd, was forced to give battle before Hampden's arrival. Charles, with the advantage of position, artillery and numbers, announced to his troops that "the influence of my Royal authority, derived from God, Whose substitute, under Christ, I am," would ensure victory, and sent his troops down the hill to crush Essex. Once again, Rupert, by a magnificent charge, carried all before him on his wing, pursuing the fugitives to Kington, a village two miles behind the lines, where he plundered the baggage-waggons of the Parliamentarians and massacred the women and children.

This occupation, however, was interrupted by the arrival of Hampden, who, although a day's march behind, had, by forced marches, gained several hours, and now provided Rupert with a "whiff of grapeshot" which persuaded him to return hastily to the field of battle. Here he found that the Parliamentarians had rallied and defeated the King's own guard. Sir Edward Verney lay dead, with the Royal Standard snatched from his lifeless hand.



Hampden followed Rupert as quickly as possible, but night had put an end to that "godly Sabbath-day's work" before he was able to report to Essex. Both sides claimed the victory, but victory for Parliament was barren unless it could hinder the King's march on London. Hampden failed in his attempt to persuade Essex to renew the attack, and the army returned to Warwick, on its way back to Northampton. Charles, unhindered, marched on to Oxford, which he made his headquarters on October 29th.

It seemed that the cause of Parliament was doomed. The county levies, cut off from the main force and menaced now by the advancing Royalists, were badly shaken. To the Lieutenants of Buckinghamshire, Hampden wrote, on October 31st :

GENTLEMEN, — The army is now at Northampton, moving every day nearer to you. If you disband not, we may be a mutual succour to each other ; but if you disperse, you make yourselves and your country a prey.

You shall hear daily from

Your servant,

JOHN HAMPDEN

I wrote this enclosed letter yesterday and thought it would have come to you then ; but the messenger had occasion to stay till this morning.

We cannot be ready to march till to-morrow ; and then, I believe, we shall. I desire you will be pleased to send

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to me again, as soon as you can, to the army, that we may know what posture you are in, and then you will hear which way we go. You shall do me a favour to certify me what you hear of the King's forces ; for I believe your intelligence is better from Oxford and those parts than ours can be.

Your humble servant,

JOHN HAMPDEN

Northampton, *November 1, 1642.*

In London, meanwhile, the Houses had decided to treat with the King for peace, and when Hampden, with Essex's army, at last reached the City, he found negotiations in progress. At once he threw his influence on the side of Pym and the War Party. It was not that he opposed peace, but that he was vehement against peace at any price. A member of the Peace Party, speaking of "Pym, Hampden, Strode and other fiery spirits who, accounting their own position desperate, did not care though they hazarded the whole kingdom to save themselves," did them less than justice. Their attitude was better expressed by Pym himself, in a speech to the citizens of London at the Guildhall.

"Though we desire peace very much," he told them, "yet a peace to betray religion, and to betray our own liberties, we shall always esteem worse than war. We shall not be contented with the name, without a reformation that shall maintain

the power of it. And we shall pursue the maintenance of our liberties ; liberties that may not only be the laws and statutes but liberties that may be in practice and execution. For to have printed liberties and not to have liberties in truth and realities is but to mock the kingdom.”

In point of fact, the King had no intention of making peace. During the negotiations, he continued his advance, and, on November 12th, while the Houses were still discussing the matter, sent Rupert to take Brentford, which was guarded by Holles and occupied by Brooke.

Essex was in his seat in the House of Lords when he heard the cannon which announced the attack. He hurried out. But Hampden was at Brentford before him. With his Greencoats he rushed to the rescue and managed to cover the retreat of the broken Redcoats and Purplecoats, though he was not strong enough to prevent Rupert pillaging the town.

Next day Charles, continuing his advance, found that all idea of treating for peace had been abandoned. An army of 24,000 men lay at Turnham Green to bar his way to London. Behind it was a united city, whose citizens “ as soon as they were come from the morning sermon, of their own voluntary and free accord took the greatest part of the victuals which they had provided for their own dinners,

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and sent it to Guildhall to be sent to the army."

At headquarters, Hampden again pleaded for immediate action, and so far prevailed that Essex allowed him to take a strong detachment to Acton, whence he could sweep round and attack Charles in the rear. It might even be possible to cut off his retreat to Oxford, and so end the war. But no sooner had Hampden left Turnham Green than Essex changed his mind and recalled him. Charles retreated, again unhindered, to Reading, where he left a garrison, and thence once more to Oxford.

With the vanishing of the immediate threat to London and the advent of winter, the cry for negotiations continued from the Peace Party, now reinforced by Holles, and Hampden's time was divided between the political battle and the military.

In the field, he had realised that the loose county organisations were no longer sufficiently strong successfully to counter the Royalists, and, with his colleagues, he devised a scheme to merge the various districts in larger units. Thus were formed the Midland Association, comprising Buckinghamshire and seven other counties; the Eastern Association, of which Oliver Cromwell, with his thousand "Ironsides," was the leading spirit; and the Association of Warwickshire and Staffordshire, under Lord Brooke. The result of this organisation was a great increase in efficiency.

Parliament presented a more difficult task. In February the Peace Party triumphed, and, in spite of Hampden's efforts, they opened negotiations with the King on the subject of disbandment. These proceedings inevitably weakened Parliament's cause in the country by revealing divided counsels and strengthened the King, who merely pursued the policy which he had adopted when the troubles first began with Scotland – to hold out hopes of peace by negotiation while he was preparing to crush by force. The Queen had collected over £1,000,000 for him on the Continent, was herself returning to England, and had every hope that the King of France would spare troops which might be landed in Kent for the subjugation of London. The Peace Party were, indeed, playing into Charles's hands.

For Hampden, defeated in the Commons, it was bad enough to hear the cry "Peace and truth!" answered by the London shopkeepers with "Hang truth! let us have peace at any price." But it was worse to find that his nearest friends were deserting him. His daughter, Anne, had recently married young Robert Pye, thus strengthening a long friendship between the families. Now it was revealed to the House that Sir Robert Pye, the father, had written desiring "to make his peace with the King, saying that, if the war should continue

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but a few months, he easily foresaw that destruction and famine must come upon the kingdom."

"This letter being read," recorded a diarist, "although divers members of the House had been put out of the House for less offences, yet the fiery spirits, out of respect for their chief captain and ringleader, Mr. Hampden, did pass no vote against Sir Robert Pye, the father, neither at that time, nor at any time afterwards."

But if Hampden's influence was still strong enough to prevent punishment of his unworthy friends, it was powerless against treachery among his relatives. Two of his cousins, Alexander Hampden and Edmund Waller (who had remained at Westminster as Charles's spy), undertook to organise a conspiracy for the King in London, in which, by the aid of the discontented minority, the City gates should be opened to a force of 3000 Royalists, which Charles was to send secretly to the neighbourhood. To make success certain, Pym and Hampden were to be previously *seized in their beds*. That the discovery and revelation of this plot (and of the part which the King, while negotiating for peace, had taken in it) *destroyed finally* the hopes of the Peace Party, was but a bitter consolation to Hampden.

To add to disappointment and treachery came the burden of personal bereavement. His son,

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John, died ; Lord Brooke was killed by a stray arrow shot from Lichfield Cathedral, which was being used as a fortress by the Royalists ; and, as a final and crushing blow, came news of the death of his daughter, Elizabeth. The hand of the Lord was, indeed, heavy upon him.

But there was still work to be done. A week after the disclosure of Sir Robert Pye's defection, and while Waller's plot was still slowly shaping itself, he was back with the army at Windsor, preparing for an attack on Reading. Arthur Goodwin, meanwhile, at Aylesbury with the Buckinghamshire levies, determined to attack Brill, a fortified post lying between Aylesbury and Thame, and valuable as commanding the approach to Oxford.

To him, Hampden wrote :

My Lord General by your letters finds your good intention to fall upon Brill, which his Excellency is well pleased you should do, and hath therefore commanded me to let you know that you should attempt that place if you find your strength fit for it, which, in regard of the nearness of that garrison, you must know better than he can ; and that his pleasure is you should put this in execution upon Thursday next in the morning by break of day rather than at any other time. But, if that cannot be, at such time as you shall find most convenient.

Your faithful friend and humble servant,

JOHN HAMPDEN

Windsor. *January 24th, 1643.*

## JOHN HAMPDEN

I am directed to desire you presently to send hither, twenty Reading men out of Captain Forteglaus's company. They must be here to-morrow by noon or within an hour or two after, at the farthest. This you will do with as little noise as such a business can be. You may do well to provide them horses before the men know anything ; then send them from Aylesbury about five o'clock in the morning. Direct them to come into Windsor, but three or four in a company at the most.

Arthur's attack was a failure, nor were the " Reading men " needed so immediately for purposes of information as the postscript suggested. Five days later, Hampden wrote again :

It grieves me much you had no better success at Brill, and that it should deprive us of that valiant Captain Jermyn.

The enterprise intended against Reading took not effect the first day for want of a bridge over the Kennet, where some of our forces were to have passed ; and, though it was considered of to be put in execution the second day, yet upon serious debate it was thought better to be foreborne.

I read your letter to my Lord General, who was very sensible of that passage in it where you express trouble that he should think you disobedient to his commands concerning which, he purposing to write with his own hand, I need say no more but that you will be assured that he neither hath nor ever had the least jealousy of your obedience.

Since it hath pleased God to deny our desires in this



attempt upon him, we have great cause to bless him that so many of our worthy friends are yet preserved, among whom, that yourself is come off with so much honour and safety, it is a great comfort to

Your assured friend and servant,

JOHN HAMPDEN

I thank you for your favour to Robert Pye, to whom I beseech you to continue it and add your own counsel.

Reading was not taken for some months, owing to a virtual cessation of hostilities while negotiations with the King were in progress. When Hampden was not at Westminster, fighting the Peace Party, he and "all they who desired still to strike at the root, very earnestly insisted" that Essex should abandon the project of attacking Reading and be prepared to march directly on Oxford – a plan which, as Hyde confessed, "had put the King's affairs into great confusion." But Essex still delayed. After the failure of the peace plans, on April 15th, he advanced on Reading.

Against superior odds and with an insufficient supply of food, the town surrendered. Though Colonel Feilding, in command of the garrison, heard, after he had begun the parleys, that Charles and Rupert were on their way to relieve him, he refused to break his word. Terms were discussed in the house of Sir Francis Knollys – Hampden's

father-in-law – and the garrison was allowed to march out with the honours of war, as Hampden, with a few soldiers and a working-party, entered it to examine whether or not it had been mined.

Feilding was greeted by the King with an accusation of treachery and was condemned to death. In vain, Hampden asked Charles for a safe-conduct to enable him to visit Oxford to give witness on Feilding's behalf that his actions had only been those of an honourable soldier. Feilding was, however, reprieved after he had twice mounted the scaffold to taste death in imagination.

As soon as Reading was taken and invested with Essex's main force, Hampden returned to London, only to be recalled by the news that some of the troops, decimated by the fever and plague which arose from the unhealthy state of the town, had mutinied. It seemed that disasters would never end. Hampden's presence, indeed, quelled the mutiny, but his influence could not prevent the treachery of yet another of his friends. In the north, Hotham decided to betray Hull to the Queen.

But, at the darkest hour, the dawn lightened. On the evening of May 13th, in an unknown affray on a distant road, fortune changed. Oliver Cromwell, with twelve troops of horse, "whereof some so poor and broken that you shall seldom see worse," found himself out-numbered by two to one by an

opposing force of Royalist cavalry. Unhesitant, caring nothing for numbers, he gave the order to charge and scattered the Cavaliers before him. "With this handful," he wrote, "it pleased God to cast the scale." And, in truth, "the whole fortune of the Civil War was in that nameless skirmish." Rupert was to go down before a more splendid rider.

Isolated victories were, however, insufficient. Though the Associations had proved successful, there must be more coherence still. In his endeavour to strengthen a centralised organisation, Hampden appealed to every quarter for men and money. On June 9th, he wrote to another cousin, Sir Thomas Barrington, the member for Colchester and a man of influence in his county :

SIR, — My Lord General hath written to the county of Essex to call in the well-affected people to his assistance, and hath entreated the help of the Deputy Lieutenants in it. The work is so necessary and so hopeful that I cannot but improve the interest I have in yourself for the promoting of it.

The power of Essex is great, a place of most life of religion in the land, and your power in the county is great too. The difficulties of this war needs the utmost of both. Our army wants both men and money, and therefore their help in this way proposed would be very seasonable.

I know you need not to be moved to a thing that you

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apprehend for the good of the cause. Such I conceive this business for the good of the kingdom in general, and so of Essex in particular. Consider of it, and you will find it deserves your serious and hearty endeavours. It will be a service acceptable to my Lord General, and you shall further engage

Your affectionate cousin and servant,

JOHN HAMPDEN

Stokenchurch : *June 9th* : 1643.

It was the last word of Hampden's that was to reach posterity.

## XVI

### DEATH MARCH

**N**EXT day, my Lord General moved at last. Leaving Reading, he made Thame his headquarters and placed his men at various points in the surrounding countryside to protect it from plunder. With Rupert and his cavalry in Oxford, twelve miles away, such a policy invited casualties. Isolated outposts, many of them consisting of untried levies, were magnets to the Cavaliers. Far from being able to protect the countrymen from marauders, they could not even save themselves from massacre.

Hampden's remonstrances were useless. He pointed out the danger of a weak, straggling line, open to successful attack at so many points in country where even the contour of the hills and woods aided the offensive. But Essex's policy demanded such a disposition. He intended to advance slowly on Oxford, closing in from all sides, but at the same time to remain sufficiently mobile to intercept, if necessary, the Queen's reinforcements, which were on their way from Yorkshire:

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On the 13th he sent a detachment which successfully invested Wheatley, lying in the direct line between Thame and Oxford, four miles from Oxford. By this move he gained possession of the only bridge in those parts over the river, which flowed, a dividing boundary, between the King's country and Parliament's. Rupert's incursions were thus confined to the lower road, over the bridge at Chiselhampton, six miles to the south.

On the 17th, Essex endeavoured further to consolidate his position by ordering an attack on Islip, to the north of Oxford, but the force of 2500 men to whom he entrusted the work retreated without striking a blow. That same afternoon there was a stir in the King's quarters.

Colonel Hurry, a deserter, informed Rupert that a convoy was on its way from London to Thame, carrying £21,000 for the payment of the Parliamentary troops. It might be possible to capture it. At the least, as the enemy's attention would presumably be concentrated on the northern approach, they might with comparative safety raid the southern outposts.

At four in the afternoon, Rupert set out with 2000 men and made his way in safety across the bridge at Chiselhampton. But, for fear of observation, it was necessary to proceed cautiously, and when night fell he had given up hope of reaching

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Wycombe (where he planned to intercept the waggons) until next day. He could, however, attack various hamlets and villages. At dawn he surprised a few horse at Postcombe ; then, acting on Hurry's information that there were some levies resting at Chinnor, he took that village, fired it, shot down or knocked on the head about fifty raw recruits who tried to escape and tied the 120 who surrendered, half naked, to his men's horses, to be dragged back to Oxford in triumph.

The alarm of his presence had by now spread to the countryside. The men in charge of the convoy, realising the danger, drove their carts into the safety of the woods, where Rupert, fearing an attack by Essex's main force, did not dare to follow. The Prince, his prize gone, wheeled round sharply and prepared to return to Oxford to give an account of his "beating up of the rebels' quarters."

Rupert and Hurry, however, were not alone in their realisation that the Parliamentary attack on the northern road might weaken the defences on the southern. Hampden, neither participating in the advance on Islip nor remaining with Essex at Thame, had ridden down to inspect the southern outposts and had slept that night at Watlington. Now, awakened by the clamour and learning of the disasters at Postcombe and Chinnor, he dressed hastily and hurried out to find what force was

available. He realised instantly that Rupert's raid might be the turning-point of the war. The tactics which had been prevented at Turnham Green might avail now. Surely Essex would see that. If only the Prince could be prevented from recrossing the river, his defeat and capture were certain. He sent a trooper at breakneck speed to Thame to advise Essex to go immediately, with a strong force of horse and foot, to Chiselhampton bridge, and there, at all costs, cut off Rupert's retreat. For himself, he determined to delay Rupert as long as possible by continual skirmishing. He put himself at the head of a cavalry troop stationed at Watlington, sent out for any available reinforcements, and set out in pursuit of the Royalists.

Though several of his friends tried to dissuade him from risking himself in so hazardous an enterprise, he refused. Hopelessly outnumbered as he was, he knew that to defeat the 2000 Royalists was impossible, but by harrying them some precious time at least might be gained and Essex enabled to make the bridge.

"This insolence," said Rupert, "is not to be borne." At Chalgrove Field, three miles from Chiselhampton, he overtook his infantry and halted them among the standing corn. Placing his cavalry in the van, he drew them up in battle order behind



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a hedge and waited for the insolent skirmishers. As three troops of Parliamentary horse, advancing from the direction of Thame, appeared, he attacked with his cavalry and routed them. But, as they were scattering, Hampden, with two troops, came up on the other flank. Rallying the defeated horsemen, he put himself at their head and gave the order to charge.

With Hampden leading, courage returned to the disheartened troops. His presence alone was a reinforcement. The men, unaware indeed of the magnitude of the issue at stake, were very sure that they must follow him even to an attack which was very like suicide. The Royalists themselves bore testimony that that handful of Parliamentarians fought that day as Roundheaded knaves had never fought before.

But in the first desperate attack Hampden was wounded. From the sheltering hedge poured a stream of fire. Two bullets, well directed, struck his shoulder, smashing the bone and entering the body. His arm fell, limp and useless, to his side.

Able neither to continue the charge nor to dismount, he turned and rode off the field, "with his head hanging down and resting his hands upon the neck of his horse." It would be possible, perhaps, to reach Pyrton, two or three miles to the south-east, where they would dress his wound at the manor

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house — Elizabeth's home. It might be that he could return to the fight. Or, if the hurt were mortal, he could die there.

"*Vestigia nulla retrorsum.*" But was the road itself turning back at last? Twenty-four years ago, on just such a day, though with the cornfields untrampled by war and the meadows at peace under the heat-haze, he had ridden light-heartedly to Elizabeth at Pyrton to make the final plans for their wedding. It wanted but six days to the anniversary of it.

But as he was riding slowly, his mind half dazed by the pain of his body, he was overtaken. Arthur Goodwin came up with him. The day was lost. Essex had arrived too late and Rupert had crossed the bridge in safety. It was possible, also, that some Royalist horsemen were still at large in that district and it would be unsafe to attempt to reach Pyrton. They must go back to Thame.

So the road turned still further upon itself. As the church bells called the people of Thame to the Sunday evensong, John and Arthur rode side by side for the last time past the Grammar School where, forty years ago, their friendship had started. At the Town Hall, surrounded by a crowd of soldiers and townspeople, Hampden, almost fainting, was helped from his horse into the house of Ezekiel Browne, opposite. The surgeons who attended

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him did not at first despair, but it soon became evident that, though he might live for some days, the wound was mortal.

But there was still work to be done. Rallying his powers, he dictated counsel to Parliament on the further conduct of the war. The hour was dark still. Reinforcements had reached the King. The capital itself would again be menaced and its defence could only be ensured by the concentration of a strong force on the London road. There must be no more affairs of outposts.

Pym agreed. Furiously he wrote to Essex that the men were safer under the King's protection than under his. Essex offered to resign. But Hampden had no reproaches.

He knew, now, that he was dying. On the morning of June 24th he turned to Arthur, took his leave of him, and never spoke again. As he sank back in his last coma, Arthur hurried out. John would have wished that : there was still work to be done. At the door he met their friend, Dr. Gyles (whose parsonage at Chinnor, Hampden, in the days of peace, had helped to design). He had been sent by the King to enquire whether Hampden was dead.

Dr. Gyles did not like his mission. He stood there hesitant, remembering the past. In the early days of the war, when certain waggons containing his goods had been plundered, he had applied to

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Hampden for redress. The messenger he sent had arrived as Hampden received news of the death of his eldest son. Later he sent again. The second messenger had arrived as Hampden received news of the death of his beloved daughter, Elizabeth. And now, the third time, Dr. Gyles had come in person, feeling "like a screech owl."

Such strange conjunctions troubled him. The people of Thame, clustering silently round the house, had not forgotten that this was Hampden's wedding-day. And at Oxford, as Dr. Gyles knew, the Royalists saw it as a commendable manifestation of Divine justice that his death-wound had been received on Chalgrove, where he had first mustered troops against the King.

Dr. Gyles, overcoming his fears, sent word in that he was the bearer of enquiries from the King. Those at the bedside, though they doubted whether Hampden could any longer understand, told him of it, and some of the watchers imagined that they saw a momentary recognition, a last attempt of the lips to frame a final courtesy. A few hours later he was dead.

They buried him next day. As many troops as could be spared joined with his Greencoats, with drums muffled and arms reversed, to follow the coffin. The road was nearing its end. The last stretch of it wound back to its beginning, as the

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cortege set out for Hampden House, serene among its hills and woods.

In the distance, the great white cross, cut centuries ago on a chalky hillside, spoke of older things. The mourners, led by Dr. Spurstow, the chaplain of Hampden's regiment, sang the ninetieth Psalm, with its unfaltering affirmation : " Lord, Thou hast been our dwelling-place in all generations," and its proud prayer : " Let the beauty of the Lord our God be upon us : and establish Thou the work of our hands ; yea, the work of our hands, establish Thou it."

They sang still as they returned, leaving Hampden at rest beside Elizabeth. Their leader dead, they marched back to the battle with the forty-third Psalm on their lips : " Why art thou cast down, O my soul ? and why art thou disquieted within me ? Hope in God."

But Arthur Goodwin stayed at Hampden, with the boy who was now heir to the vast estates – the twelve-year-old Richard, whose birth Hampden had written of to Eliot, dying in the Tower.

" I am now here at Hampden in doing the last duty for the deceased owner of it, of whom every honest man hath a share in the loss, and therefore will likewise in the sorrow," wrote Arthur to his daughter. " All his thoughts and endeavours of his life was zealously in for this cause of God's,

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which he continued in all his sickness, even to his death.

“ For all I can hear, the last words he spake was to me, though he lived six or seven hours after I came away as in a sleep. Truly, Jenny, (and I know you may easily be persuaded to it), he was a gallant man, an honest man, an able man, and, take all, I know not to any man living second. God in mercy hath rewarded him.

“ I have writ to London for a black suit ; I pray let me beg of you a broad black ribbon to hang about my standard.

“ I would we could all lay it to heart that God takes away the best amongst us.”

At Oxford, King Charles knighted the deserter Hurry “ for services rendered.”

Y<sup>rs</sup> 5<sup>th</sup>

'Tis well for me that letters  
cannot blurt, else you would rightly read  
me guilty. I am ashamed of so long a  
silence and know not how to excuse it,  
for as nothing but business can speak for  
me, of which kind I have many advocates.  
So can I not tell how to call any business  
greater than holding an affectionate cor-  
respondence with so excellent a friend. My  
only confidence is I stand at a bar of  
law, where <sup>affidavits</sup> ~~proofs~~ are much more frequent  
than censures. Sure I am that confession  
of neglect doth not accuse me; though  
evidence of fact doth. I would add more  
but of entertainment of a stranger should  
call upon me, and one other unavoidable  
occasion; holds me excused therefore from  
further: and if you vouchsafe me a better  
letter, I beg of you to teach me  
some theft of time; that I may employ  
more in your service, who will remember

Your faithful servant  
& affectionate friend  
John Hampden

Hampd: Command my respects to  
M<sup>rs</sup> Eliot. 21. & find out if not given  
in his colours.  
1631

A LETTER FROM JOHN HAMPDEN TO SIR JOHN ELIOT

From a print in the British Museum.





## SOURCES FOR HAMPDEN'S LIFE

**A**NTHONY A WOOD wrote a life of Hampden soon after his death, but the first attempt at a biography proper was *Some Memorials of John Hampden, his Party and his Times*, by Lord Nugent, published in 1831 and dedicated to the King. It was given wide publicity by Macaulay's review of it in the *Edinburgh Review* in the December of that year, and, though attacked by Southey and Isaac D'Israeli, it has remained the standard (and only) full-length biography. In 1837 John Forster followed it with a life in Lardner's *Cabinet Cyclopædia*, adding little of importance and adopting, in some places, Nugent's phraseology. But in his *Sir John Eliot* in 1865 he printed an additional letter of Hampden's to Eliot and corrected some of Nugent's mistakes in regard to the famous correspondence. In any case, Nugent was not, as has often been asserted, the first to print the Hampden-Eliot letters (see p. 337).

Nugent's *Memorials* is a disappointing production. It is carelessly inaccurate. In some cases he has not troubled even to verify the Parliamentary proceedings and has given wrong dates. He has accepted spurious pamphlets as genuine evidence and quoted as authorities for certain statements "manuscripts at Stowe" which cannot be found. It is turgidly written – a sort of caricature of the balanced beauties of eighteenth century style – pompous and partisan. Also, a considerable amount of it is irrelevant, although it must be admitted that the full title grants a certain licence.

S. R. Gardiner contributed a life of Hampden to the ninth edition of the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, but this has now

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been considerably cut in order, apparently, to allow more space for an article of "Harvesting Methods in America."

The best life of Hampden is the (necessarily) short memoir contributed by Sir Charles Firth to the *Dictionary of National Biography*.

### I

1594 to 1625

*Chapters I to III*

Very few facts are known of the first thirty-one years of John Hampden's life. That he was born in London in 1594 is merely an inference of Wood from the Matriculation Register of Oxford, where he was entered as a commoner at Magdalen in 1609. That he was educated at the Free Grammar School at Thame is merely a deduction from Wood's general statement (quoted on p. 26), reinforced by a very strong tradition and the fact – of not inconsiderable weight – that no other school has claimed him. His Latin verses on the Palatine marriage are printed in *Lusus Palatini*, published in 1613, and an earlier effort on the death of Prince Henry in *Luctus Posthumus* (1612).

Of his career as a student of law, the sole memorial is the entry of his name on the books of the Inner Temple in 1613. For his youthful exuberance at this time (p. 36) the authority is Clarendon. That he married Elizabeth Simeon on June 24th, 1619, is shown on the register of Pyrton, and that his second child, Elizabeth, was baptised on October 17th, 1622, on the register of Hampden. (When his eldest child, John, was born, or where, is not, as far as I can discover, certainly known.) That he sat for Grampound in the 1621 Parliament is recorded in the official returns of members of Parliament.

The supposition that he was actively concerned with the restoration of the franchise to the Buckinghamshire boroughs is based solely on Lord Nugent's statement that

## SOURCES FOR HAMPDEN'S LIFE

"the cases, there is little reason to doubt, were in reality drawn up and put forward by Hampden, although ostensibly managed by Hakewill. This is all the more probable from its appearing, from Hampden's correspondence, that Hakewill had before been frequently employed by him to conduct suits and arbitrations for him, respecting his property in that county." There may be no reason to doubt this, but Nugent gives no indication of the letters to which he refers, and they would seem—like much of the material to which he had access—to have disappeared.

It is generally assumed that Hampden sat in the 1624 Parliament, but the official list contains no mention of him. He was certainly mentioned by name in the report of Glanville's committee on the restored franchise as being, with Sir Alexander Denton, the representative for Wendover, and he may have taken his seat between May 4th, when the Wendover matter was settled, and May 29th, when the Parliament ended.

The letter of Hampden's mother quoted at the beginning of Chapter II is from the Harleian Collection at the British Museum. The background and history of the Hampden family is contained fully, with reference to sources, in Lipscomb's *History of the County of Buckinghamshire*, and the picture of school life is drawn from Foster Watson's *The Old Grammar Schools* and, more particularly, from *A Short History of Thame School* by J. Howard Brown, whom I have also to thank for much verbal information.

## II

1625 to 1632

*Chapters IV to VII*

The matter of the Privy Seal loan (p. 80) is mentioned in the *Verney Papers* in a letter from Sir William Borlace to Sir Thomas Denton. Hampden's list of "the causes" for

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Buckingham's impeachment (p. 84) is among the Port Eliot MSS. The events leading up to the Forced Loan are mentioned in the *Calendar of State Papers, Domestic*, 1627-9, and the imprisonment in the Gate House and Hampshire by Rushworth (Vol. I., 428, 473). The authority for the effect of this imprisonment on Hampden's health is the obituary notice of him in the *Weekly Account* for July 3rd-10th, 1643. That "his blood in its temper was acrimonious, as the scurf commonly on his face showed," is recorded by Sir Philip Warwick in his *Memoirs* (ed. 1701, p. 299), and it seems reasonable to connect this symptom with the results of his imprisonment, in view of the earlier statement.

Hampden's answer to the Privy Council (p. 93) also rests on a journalistic source - the *Mercurius Aulicus* for April 7th, 1644, where the answer is not attributed to Hampden alone, but to Saye and others. It seems to me, however, much more characteristic of Hampden's urbanity than of Saye's spleen (cf. p. 60).

That Hampden was present at the unofficial meeting at Sir Robert Cotton's house before the opening of the 1628 Parliament (p. 100) is based on conjecture. Forster (Eliot, II., 114) gives a list based on memoranda found among Eliot's papers, but this is admittedly not complete. Considering Hampden's personal interest in the matter and the obvious reliance on him shown by entrusting "The Causes" to him (as well as Eliot's friendship), I think it extremely probable that he was there and have assumed his presence - as also for the final meeting before the March 2nd affair (p. 136). The committees on which he served in this Parliament are recorded in the Commons' Journals.

Of the various accounts of the 1629 session, Grosvenor's Diary alone (*Commons Debates for 1629*, Notestein & Relf, p. 225) ascribes to Hampden the short speech on February 20th (p. 134). I have called it his "first speech" in the absence of any evidence that he had previously addressed the House.

## SOURCES FOR HAMPDEN'S LIFE

The letters quoted in Chapter VII are, several of them, already famous by reason of quotation from and allusion to them in Macaulay's essay of Hampden, a review of Lord Nugent's *Memorials*. Nugent prints them in the wrong order, and, in one case, ascribes a wrong correspondent. Nor in point of fact was he the first to print them. Several had appeared a year before the publications of the *Memorials*, in an appendix to the third volume of Isaac D'Israeli's *Commentaries on the Life and Reign of Charles the First*. Over thirty years later, John Forster printed parts of them again in the second volume of his *Sir John Eliot*, correcting some of Nugent's mistakes and adding to them the letter of August 18th, 1630 (p. 147), which was a manuscript in his own possession. The last letter (p. 161), that of March 21st, 1632, is in the British Museum. The rest are in the MSS. at Port Eliot.

The letters are here for the first time fully printed in the correct chronological order. I have modernised the spelling and broken them into paragraphs for the sake of the reader's convenience. To mitigate in part this piece of vandalism, which will rightly be so reprehensible to the historical scholar, a facsimile of the last letter is included in the volume (p. 332), so that all may see the extent of the falsification.

It will be noted, incidentally, that the date on the MS. is 1631, and this may be a convenient place to remind the reader who is not already aware of it that the year ended on March 25th. Instead of the more accurate style of dating this—"1631/32"—I have adopted Gardiner's example of quoting all dates in accordance with modern usage.

Where, in this chapter, a letter of Hampden's is referred to but not quoted, it means that it is lost and its contents can only be inferred from Eliot's reply.

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## III

1632-1634

### *Chapter VIII*

Hampden's activities as Justice of the Peace for Buckinghamshire can be gleaned from scattered references in the *Calendar of State Papers, Domestic Series*. The letter concerning the state of the roads is 1632 (No. 38) the dispute about the paper-mills and the misdeeds of Edmund Phipps are recorded in 1637 under the date of January 19th (No. 40), although there is a previous reference to them on August 21st, 1635 (No. 17), and his activities must certainly have been in evidence during this earlier period. The fixing of the price of corn and the resultant annoyance of the bakers can be found in the 1629-31 volume, No. 50. Sir Nathaniel Brent's letter about Hampden's muster in Beaconsfield churchyard is under October 27th, 1634 (No. 35 of the 1634-35 volume).

The matter of Sherington Bridge is revealed in two letters to Sir William Andrewes which are preserved in the British Museum (Stowe MSS. 142, ff. 39 and 40); and which, as far as I am aware, have never been printed. The first, dated 1630, runs :

NOBLE SIR, - I have acquainted Sir William Fleetwood with your advertisement concerning the track about Sherington bridge. He intendeth to be himself at the *Assizes* to follow the business. Whether I shall appear in it or be at the *Assizes* I am not yet resolved in regard of a particular occasion befallen, with which at our next meeting I will at full acquaint you.

In the meantime 'tis Sir William's desire that you will procure somebody, though yourself appear not, to warn the witnesses and to learn of William Arpen and George Hewlett what they can say that is material. Of the jury no doubt is made but by your care they shall be honest and indifferent.

The issue must be left to God. The witnesses must be solicited to appear. I beseech you let me hear as soon as

## SOURCES FOR HAMPDEN'S LIFE

conveniently you may whether this letter be come into your hands and what you think farther fit to be done.

With leave of my humble service to my Lady, I rest

Your very assured friend,

JOHN HAMPDEN

The second letter, dated from Aylesbury on March 21st, 1634, is :

SIR, — At this meeting I had some conference with Sir Thomas Tyrningham in presence of Mr. Chubnall and the two High Constables of Newport Hundreds, but no way could be thought upon for the repair of the bridge. Then I went to the Clerk of the Assizes to see how things stood there and found that the bridge was indicted the last Assizes and that now issues would go out against the town of Sherington if they did not appear of the indictment or take some other course to prevent it — with which I acquainted Sir Thomas.

He (upon the bench the next day) moves Mr. Justice Berkeley, that then sat, for the stay of issues ; whereupon an order was made for four justices to view the bridge Q.C. with relation to the statute, of which number I was nominated to be one. But upon that reason, that in regard one end of the bridge was in a parish wherein I had some land, and so might be held unindifferent, I was put out and two others put in my room : the copy of which order I have sent you here enclosed ; the time of meeting thereupon is appointed to be upon Wednesday in Easter week, about twelve o'clock, where I doubt not but to meet you, to whom, with my Lady, I present my service and rest

Your assured friend,

JOHN HAMPDEN

The quarrel between Hampden and the Treasurer rests on extremely flimsy evidence but I have included it, with the proviso "the story was told," because it is at least possible and certainly characteristic. D'Israeli had made the misstatement that Hampden and the Sheriff of Buckinghamshire had some private quarrel. Nugent corrected him at some length and with obvious enjoyment. D'Israeli replied in a pamphlet entitled *Eliot, Hampden and Pym* (1832), in which he admitted his mistake

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in ascribing the quarrel to the Sheriff but insisted that it occurred with the Treasurer. He told how a friend of his, "on a visit to an ancient mansion in Bucks," discovered "a MS. which, when put together, consisted of fourteen to fifteen hundred pages of foolscap paper and not complete, while parts, as usual, were injured by damp. Appearing at first to be a book of accounts, it would probably have been laid aside, had not his eye caught the name of Hampden. The handwriting was attested to be that of the Treasurer of the county, and on further scrutiny it was discovered to have been the journal of that magistrate. There were inserted long dialogues between the writer and Hampden. The subject was a dispute or litigation about a piece of common land. The writer recounted his meeting Hampden, who, he said, 'raised his whip at me and I did the same at him, but he dared not cross the hedge which stood between us.' In one or two other places appeared a character of Hampden written in 'the most bitter terms that envy, hatred and malice could suggest.'

"An extraordinary circumstance attending this MS. is that, at present, it is not to be found."

It is, of course, quite impossible to accept this as a serious authority. On the other hand, the circumstances of historical writing a century ago were such that it is equally unfair to dismiss it altogether as a fabrication of D'Israeli's. Many of Nugent's own statements, which are generally accepted as "authorities," are based on documents "not to be found," and he was quite as violent a partisan as D'Israeli. His Hampden, a meek martyr-patriot, could certainly never have raised his riding-whip in temper. But there seems to me no reason to suppose that the real Hampden would not.

Certain details of Hampden's life at Hampden, including the existence of his servant John Baldwin and his intended epitaph, as well as the extent of his woodland property, are drawn from his will, dated 1636. The



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household duties of Elizabeth Hampden are modelled on those of the Verney household, another great Buckinghamshire family, of which we possess so detailed an account in the *Verney Papers*.

With regard to colonisation schemes, the only one in which Hampden certainly had a part was the founding of Connecticut, but endeavours have been made to prove that he was interested in the matter far earlier and that he had, in fact, visited America in the reign of James I. This involves the identification of him with a Mr. John Hampden of London, and, as the similarity of the name alone is hardly proof, and as, moreover, it is unlikely that, had he been to America, no more would have been heard of it in later years, I have not accepted this theory. But it may be of interest to give the story, which will be found in Forster's life of Hampden, quoted from an article by a Mr. Rutt in the *Examiner* : " In a work printed at Boston, N.E., 1736, entitled *A Chronological History of New England*, by Thomas Prince, M.A., at p. 129, from *Winslow's Relation*, one of the earliest printed tracts, I find the following narrative : ' 1623, March. News comes to Plimouth that Masassoit is like to die and that a Dutch ship is driven ashore before his house, so high that she could not be got off till the tide's increase. Upon which the governor sends Mr. Edward Winslow and Mr. John Hampden, a gentleman of London, with Hobomak, to visit and help him and speak with the Dutch. The first night we lodge at Namasket ; next day, at one, come to a ferry in Corbitant's country and, three miles further, to Mattapuyst his dwelling-place (though he be no friend to us), but find him gone to Pakanokik, about five or six miles off. Late within night we get thither, whence the Dutch had departed ; find Massasoit extreme low, his sight gone, his teeth fixed, having swallowed nothing for two days ; but, using means, he surprisingly revives. We stay and help him two nights and two days. At the end of the latter, taking our leave, he expresses his great

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thankfulness. We come and lodge with Corbitant, at Mattapuyst, who wonders that we, being two, should be so venturous. Next day, on our journey, Hobomak tells us that at his coming away, Massasoit privately charged him to tell Mr. Winslow there was a plot of the Massachusets. That night we lodge at Namasket; the next get home.' . . . The following entry in the *Chronological History* (p. 140) may fix, with great probability, in the absence of any information on the subject, the date of Hampden's return to England :—' 1623, Sept. 10. This day the *Ann* sails for L'don being laden with clap-boards and all the beaver and other furs we have; with whom we send Mr. Winslow, to inform how things are and procure what we want.' . . . Dr. Hommes of Cambridge, N.E., in his *American Annals* (1808?) says (I. 185) :— "Mr. Hampden wintered (1623) with the Plymouth colonists and desired much to see the country and is supposed by Dr. Belknap (Biog. II. 29) to be the same who afterwards distinguished himself by his opposition to the arbitrary demands of Charles I.' . . . From Feb. 1621-2 to Feb. 1623-4 Hampden's senatorial duties must have been entirely suspended. Thus there would be abundant leisure for the visit to America."

### IV

1635-1639

#### *Chapter IX*

The attempted emigration to America, with which this chapter concludes, also rests on questionable sources. The fact that Nugent accepts it does not weigh very heavily in its favour. Neal, in his *History of the Puritans* (II. 287), gives it with the saving clause "if we may believe Dr. George Bates and Mr. Dugdale, two famous Royalists." Sir Charles Firth, in his article on Hampden in the *Dictionary of National Biography*, dismisses it thus :

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"A popular legend represents him as seeking to emigrate in April 1638, in company with Cromwell and Heselrige, but the story is without foundation. It is impossible to suppose that Hampden would have attempted to leave England while the suit about ship-money was still undecided, and the decision of the judges was not given till June 1638."

It was a consideration for Sir Charles's reason for rejecting it that led me to use it. By April 1638 the verdict was perfectly well known. Six judges had decided against Hampden, so that he could not possibly have won his case. The only two who were expected to find for him had done so. Whatever the remaining four decided, it was certain that Finch, at least, would support the Crown – which would give the King a majority. If as a result of the judgment the King were to enforce payment from Hampden, he could distrain on his goods, whether the owner were there or not. It was no case of Hampden fleeing the country in order to avoid payment of money (which, in any case, was so little that it could not have mattered one way or the other). Also, since the founding of Connecticut, Hampden had a personal interest in America and – presumably – property there. Nor was the voyage the hazardous adventure which romantic writers seem to regard it. Winthrop, the Governor of Massachusetts, travelled to and fro. The younger Vane had been out on a visit and returned. Lord Saye had certainly contemplated a passage.

Of Cromwell's state of mind we have evidence in his famous letter in the October of that year to Mrs. St. John, in which he admitted that "I live, you know where – in Meshec, which they say signifies 'Prolonging'; in Kedar, which signifies 'Blackness.'" Of Hampden, though we have no direct evidence, it is probable that the marriage of his beloved daughter, Elizabeth, in the autumn of 1637, made Hampden House seem more empty than ever, and that the result of the ship-money trial, with its corollary

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of the indefinite suspension of Parliament, convinced him that any public services he could render his country were at an end.

Thus, instead of "it is impossible to suppose," it seems more in accord with the circumstances of the case to put "it is extremely probable." When intrinsic probability supports a "popular legend" which has a contemporary (if not particularly reliable) origin, it is surely wiser, in the absence of any documentary proof to the contrary, to use it than to refuse it.

Unfortunately, material for Hampden's private life at this time is, as far as I can discover, absolutely non-existent. Of the trial, on the other hand, there is the fullest possible report. I have used the 1719 edition of *The Tryal of Mr. Hampden*, in which the proceedings are reported at length in 215 folio pages. It is also reported in Rushworth (II. 481, etc.) and in *State Trials*. For those who wish a fuller treatment than I have given or a more accessible book than the weighty *Tryal*, there are extracts of St. John's speech and Berkeley's judgment printed in Gardiner's *Constitutional Documents of the Puritan Revolution*. Nugent's summary is quite misleading.

Miss C. D. Gordon, in the Royal Historical Society Trans. (ser. 3). IV, has given the amounts assessed and uncollected in Buckinghamshire for ship-money, which may be of interest :

Year	Assessed £	Uncollected	
		£	s. d.
1635	4500	188	1 11
1636	4500	1030	0 0
1637	4500	852	6 0
1638	1650	335	4 9
1639	4500	4500	0 0

Nugent, in an appendix to his first volume, prints a list of assessments for ship-money for each town and county in England, taken from the Stowe MSS. and differing



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His letter to the Bishop of Lincoln, reproduced both in Nugent and in Lipscomb, is from the Lambeth Library, No. 1030, 108, and the Bishop's side of the correspondence can also be found in Lipscomb *History of Buckinghamshire*, (II. 237).

The account of Hampden's arrest on May 6th is reported in the *Calendar State Papers*, Domestic 1640, p. 152, and a list of the papers found on him can be seen in the Bodleian Library at Oxford (Tanner MSS. lxxxviii. 116).

The story of his election campaign—the first in history—is given by Anthony à Wood, but, apart from the fact that Hampden was present at the meeting in London on August 31st, little is known of his movements during the period between the end of the Short and the opening of the Long Parliament. By later Royalist writers he is supposed to have visited Scotland to incite the Scots to invade England. He may have done, but, as far as I can discover, there is no evidence. Nor, considering that Sir John Savile was acting as go-between, does there seem to have been any necessity.

His later presence in Scotland as Commissioner, as well as his undoubted collaboration with Saye and the others in drawing up the letters to the Scots, seem at any rate to have identified him with Scotland in the minds of the Royalist ballad-mongers, as the following three examples will show :

*Did I for this bring in the Scot ?  
For 'tis no secret now — the plot  
Was Saye's and mine together.  
Did I for this return again,  
And spend a winter there in vain,  
Once more to invite them hither ?*

which occurs in Sir John Denham's "Mr. Hampden's Speech against Peace at the Close Committee." And, in "London's Farewell to the Parliament," he is represented in sympathy with the Scots in theological matters :

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*Farewell, John Hampden, with hey, with hey ;  
Farewell, John Hampden, with hoe ;  
He's a sly and subtle fox,  
Well read in Buchanan and Knox,  
With hey, trolly, lolly, loe ;*

while another song makes him the author of the mischief :

*" My venom swells," quoth Holles,  
" And that His Majesty knows."  
" And I," quoth Hampden, " fetch the Scots,  
Whence all this mischief grows."*

### VI

1641-1643

#### *Chapters XIII to XVI*

The sources for Hampden's work in the Long Parliament are the Lords' Journals, the Commons' Journals, the invaluable *Journal of Sir Simonds D'Ewes* and Ralph Verney's *Notes of the Long Parliament*. Clarendon, in the main, is untrustworthy, unless he is corroborated by the diarists or is merely recounting personal anecdotes. Forster, in his *Grand Remonstrance* and *Arrest of the Five Members*, besides making use of the genuine sources, incorporates some spurious material (as, of course, does Lord Nugent), including a long speech on the morning of the attempted arrest. Though this was printed and circulated in London as *A Learned and Discreet Speech of Master John Hampden* and may have represented some of his opinions, it is an obvious forgery.

Hampden's part in Strafford's trial is gleaned both from these accounts and from the eighth volume of Rushworth. The rumours of the intended offer to Hampden of the Chancellorship of the Duchy of Lancaster are to be found in the *Calendar of State Papers*, Domestic, 1641-3,

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pp. 53, 63. His appointment to the Commission to Scotland and his report of the incident are taken from *Lords' Journals*, IV. 372, 401 and V. 398, and the fourth report of the Historical Manuscripts Commission, p. 102. The articles of impeachment against the five members is printed in Gardiner's *Constitutional Documents of the Puritan Revolution*, p. 158. A letter from Hampden to the Buckinghamshire petitioners is among the Stowe MSS. (fol. 1).

The letters from Hampden to Hotham in Hull are printed from manuscripts in Lord Hotham's possession in *The Hothams* by A. M. W. Stirling (Vol. I., pp. 53-60). The letters to the Sheriff of Buckinghamshire (mentioned on pp. 291 and 293) are from the Stowe MSS. in the British Museum (188, ff. 3 and 5), and as they have not, I believe, been printed, it may be of interest to give them in full here :

SIR, - We received your letter and, according to your desires, I spake to Sir Alexander Denton for the money in his hands - being two hundred and fourteen pounds, which he hath delivered to Mr. Freer - to be laid out according to your direction. The residue of that money, being one hundred and forty pounds, remains (as we hear) in Mr. Waller's hand of Grigory's [?]. My Lord Paget is unwilling (we perceive) to put out Sir Walter Pye if he desires to continue his Captain's place, which shall be known of him as soon as an answer can be brought from the place where he is.

Besides, my Lord Paget, we find, is resolved and has declared that he will confer the place upon Mr. Bowyer in case Sir Walter Pye quit it, wherefore we hold it not convenient to name your friend, unless the opportunity had been open for him.

We have nothing more to trouble you with at this present but the tender of our best respects, that are, as we are obliged to be

Your affectionate friends and humble servants,

JOHN HAMPDEN  
ARTHUR GOODWIN

London. *January 19th, 1642*

We have sent you herewithal some Ordinances of Parliament and desire they may be put into exposition as they direct



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and

SIR, — I paid in the three hundred three score and two pounds, one shilling and two pence and have your acquittance and bags at London, which I intend to keep for you till you have paid in the rest of your money, that I may give you all your acquittances together.

I have received two small sums from the two Chalfonts, amounting in all to about fifty pounds, but which just sum I remember not. It had been paid in yesterday, but the officers were at the 'Spital, but as soon as I come back it shall be paid in, and the acquittances taken in your name, and so I shall be ready to perform any other service that you will command me.

You will see by the enclosed what we are engaged to and which I doubt not but Asshenden will perform their part, which Mr. Goodwin, at his parting, gave me in special charge to recommend to your care. And that is all I have to trouble you with, but the tender of my service which you may command.

Your faithful friend and servant

JOHN HAMPDEN

Hampden, *April 12th, 1642*

If any be willing about you to subscribe to the Irish Propositions, they have till the 20th of this instant April by the last statute.

Like many letter-writers, Hampden had a habit — as it will have been noticed — of reserving his most important remarks for his postscripts.

The verses in praise of Hampden (pp. 302, 303) are from the "Elegy on the Death of that worthy gentleman, John Hampden," by Captain J[ohn] S[iles]. It is printed, together with other memorial tributes, including two in Latin, in *Elegies on the death of that worthy and accom-  
plisht gentleman, Colonell John Hampden, Esquire*, published by Luke Norton in London on October 16th, 1643.

The letters written from Northampton to Essex in London (pp. 305, 307) are from the Tanner MSS. in the Bodleian Library at Oxford (lxii. 115 and lxiii. 153). The first of them is printed by Sanford in his *Statutes and*

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*Illustrations of the Great Rebellion* (p. 559), but he assigns it to the wrong year (1643 instead of 1642) and makes nonsense of the context in consequence. The second one I have not seen printed elsewhere before.

The letter written at Northampton to the Buckinghamshire Lieutenants (pp. 311, 312) — a hurriedly scrawled note — is among the facsimiles in the British Museum (15, 858, f. 8) and is printed by Lord Nugent (II. 319). Those written to Arthur Goodwin from Windsor (pp. 317, 318) are among the Carte MSS. in the Bodleian (ciii. 121, 123), and are printed here for the first time.

The capture of Reading is recorded in the letter sent to the Speaker by Hampden and others (Tanner MSS., lxii. 85).

The last letter, to Sir Thomas Barrington (p. 321), is among the Egerton MSS. in the British Museum (2643, f. 7) and is reprinted by Gardiner in his *History of the Great Civil War* (I. 179), though he omits the place of writing.

I have neglected the various legends of Hampden's death embodied in Clough's narrative, which, as Sir Charles Firth remarks, "though accepted as genuine by Hampden's biographers, is an impudent forgery." The narrative of the death in Goodwin's letter and the remarks of Dr. Gyles, as recorded by Sir Philip Warwick in his *Memoirs*, form the basis of my account. Similarly I have not troubled about the controversy which raged some time ago as to whether Hampden was really killed by a bullet-wound or by the bursting of his own pistol. The latter suggestion was not put forward till the eighteenth century, and is unworthy of credence. Those who are interested in the matter will find it in *Notes and Queries*, 1st ser., VIII. 647 and XII. 271, and also in Lipscomb's *History of Buckinghamshire*, II. 251.

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